life-like yet. Our toils, our trials, our perplexities have not shaken us from our purpose, or quenched our earnest faith. We will *still* labor at the building up of our National Literature, as a triumphant, a hopeful labor, although we may never see the cap-stone thereof laid, or hear, as it gushes to the rising sun, the sound of its Memnon-music. Yes—the Messenger shall yet labor at this great work, unwearied, undismayed. We have many, many *thanks* to bestow. Kind hands, noble hearts, gifted minds have aided us. What shall we say!—"our words are feeble—our *hearts* are warm;"—what shall we say! Let an eloquence that is not of words, be *felt* in this our deep and grateful acknowledgment of all we owe to the generosity and the toil of others. Still toil on with us, brethren. Our's is a noble task. Its reward shall spring up in other generations; what matter!—*we* have sowed the seed—our children shall enjoy the harvest;—it will bloom and ripen above our graves! Kind Patrons, generous Contributors, Friends, one and all—once more, A Happy New-Year. *Benedicte!*

NO NIGHT THERE.

"And there shall be no night there."—*Revelations* xxii., *5th.*

I.

There shall be no more night,
No dim and clouded sky,
To darken with its shadowing gloom
That radiant land on high;
But one eternal day
A golden light will shed,
For closing evening comes not there
Her sombre wing to spread.

II.

There shall be no more night,
No sad and troubled sleep,
Sealing awhile the weary lids
Of eyes that wake to weep;
No lonely watching hours
Beside the couch of pain,
Where the lone heart its vigil keeps
And tears and hopes are vain.

III.

There shall be no more night,
No lamp its gleams shall shed
O'er sorrowing forms subdued in grief,
Beside the shrouded dead;
The SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS,
His own effulgence throws
In healing rays of changeless light
Through all that bright repose.

IV.

Oh! earth in darkness clad!
This were a weary lot,
Mourning so oft the sunshine fled,
But for that glorious spot!
This promise will sustain
Amid thy change and blight;
This hope of that unchanging home
Where there is no more night.

V.

I fain would enter there;—
Oh! for the dove's swift wing,
Triumphantly to soar away
Where living waters spring;—
Washed in the cleansing flood,
Clothed in the unstain'd white,
I shall be there among that throng
Where there is no more night.

Bellegrove, Ky.

OUR NAVY.

[In presenting to our readers the last of the "*Lucky-Bag*," we beg leave to lay before them a few of the thoughts and reflections, to which these papers have given rise in our own mind. That things have got wrong in the Navy, and that they do require to be set right, none who have read these papers, or who are practically conversant with the Navy, will pretend to deny. Upon this point all are agreed. No one disputes as to the disease; though there is some difference of opinion as to the manner in which the remedy ought to be applied. And this difference of opinion is entertained principally among the officers themselves. We entreat them for the well-being of a noble, brave, and generous service; by their love of country; and in the name of the gallant dead who *fought* the Navy into being—to come forward in a spirit of concert and compromise, and tell their countrymen what is the matter with the Navy, and what ought to be done to relieve it of its ills. These papers describe the one, and propose the other; and in the opinion of intelligent officers, occupy grounds upon which the whole Navy ought to rally. Their diagnosis has been pronounced correct, and their remedies good, by distinguished members of the corps; and we beseech officers not to suffer the patient to linger and pine away, while they, agreeing as to the efficacy of the remedy proposed, differ only as to the manner and parts upon which it shall be applied. We are aware that efforts at reform and reorganization have been attempted from time to time, by officers assembled. But these efforts have been only partial; and we *know* that they failed of producing the desired results, because the officers *were not agreed among themselves* as to what *was* required for the Navy. All are agreed as to the plan; and differ only as to its details. In the multitude of these, wise men and the legislators of the land have been bewildered; and have been heard to exclaim, "*we know not what it is that the Navy does want.*" Let the officers hold meetings; from the abundance of their experience, let each one add his voice in testimony of the evils of the system; let them in a body agree as to the remedy proposed, and resolve to ask it, as with one voice, at the hands of their country. This people are too fond of their Navy, this Nation too proud of its good 'right arm,' to turn an adder's ear to the petition of a thousand brave and gallant officers entreating for measures of legislation, which in the hour of battle shall save their corps from the mortification of defeat, their country from disaster at sea. Congress will give all, and the Republic will not withhold any thing which the patriotism of such a body of noble spirits can ask. The papers of Harry Bluff only require to be extensively circulated, and attentively read, to bring about the desired reform. They have inspired us with renewed ardor and zeal in the cause of the Navy. Always partial to this branch of the public service, we now throw open our pages to the officers, and invite them to the discussion of its interests. In doing this, we fear not to be drawn into the political vortex of party strife. The Navy,

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like the literature of our pages, belongs to the whole nation; its interests are the interests of the country, and not of a party. We desire to see it placed in a condition that is becoming to the dignity, the honor and the interest of a nation like this. Such too, is the position in which we know its officers desire to see it. And, like the essentials of ancient oratory, the requisites on their part for obtaining this, are Action! Action!! Action!!! They understand its defects, and are the best judges of the remedies—and on occasions like this, *concert* of action is what the friends of the Navy throughout the land have a right to expect from its officers.]

Ed. Sou. Lit. Mess.

SCRAPS FROM THE LUCKY-BAG

No. IV.

OF REORGANIZING THE NAVY.

"Those who dread new remedies, must abide old evils."

Bacon.

To Mr. T. W. White,

Editor of the Southern Literary Messenger.

This number exposes some of the evils and abuses incident to the system by which the Navy is at present conducted; it proposes a remedy for them, and suggests a plan for reorganizing, and putting the Navy on a proper footing. Though addressed to you, the attention of the Committees on Naval Affairs in Congress is invited to it; and each member of those committees is respectfully requested to consider the following remarks and statements to be addressed personally and individually to himself.

When the Frigates of 1798 had been built, and legislation had commenced with regard to a Navy in time of peace, one of the first enactments of Congress, was to fix by law the maximum number of men and boys to be employed in the Naval Service of the United States. In the reduction, which, in 1801, succeeded the French war, the rank of Commander was abolished, and the number of Captains, Lieutenants and Midshipmen was made by statute to consist of one hundred and fifty-nine of the last, thirty-six of the second, and twelve of the first. The exigencies of the service, during the Tripolitan war, soon convinced the government of the necessity there was for multiplying grades, even in so small a Navy as we then had; and the grade of Commander* was re-established. The honors of this new grade served both as reward and incentive to the young officers before Tripoli. The feats of gallantry there enacted tell of the noble impulse which was then given to our youthful Navy. In 1806, the President was authorized to employ as many of the public armed vessels as he should deem necessary and expedient; but the number of officers and men was limited by law. By the act which gave this authority, the number of Lieutenants was doubled—one was added to the list of Captains—and nine were included in the list of Commanders. As late as 1809, the number of men and boys, to be employed in the Navy, was limited to 1425. But the storm which had been so long brewing on the political horizon, bursting soon after in a war with England, virtually removed all restrictions of the kind; and the power to employ was limited only by the number and capacity of the ships to receive. Since that time, the force of vessels in commission, their number, and the number of men and officers to be employed in the service, have been left entirely to Executive discretion. And, as may be supposed, subsequent history shows that, in the course of policy pursued with regard to the Navy, those entrusted with the management of its affairs have neither been governed by any fixed principles, nor regulated according to any certain laws. But, on the contrary, its condition, as well with regard to *materiel* as to *personnel*, has been exceedingly changeful—the number of guns at this time* abroad for the protection of American commerce being considerably less than five hundred, or but little more than one gun for every hundred millions of property they are intended to protect; and nearly one fourth of these is in one ship. The number of officers in service has sometimes waxed, and sometimes waned, assuming as many phases by the rate of promotion, as there have been individuals placed at the head of the Navy; for each one has been free to take his own course, and to pursue his own policy and plans with regard to it. Thus, in 1825, we find the President recommending to the Senate for promotion to the rank of Lieutenant seventy-odd Midshipmen, in a single batch, when, during the three preceding years, he had advised but a single appointment into this grade. Indeed, as many, if not more, Lieutenants were added to the service in this one year, (and they had served as Midshipmen in the war of 1812, and are still Lieutenants,) than had been made during the ten years that preceded. In 1828, under another President, one hundred and fifteen Midshipmen were appointed. And in 1830, when the appointing power had again passed into other hands, warrants to Midshipmen were issued so sparingly, that, when the day of examination came, it appeared there were only five Midshipmen to present themselves, whose appointments bore the date of this year. In 1835, the Navy Department issued warrants to seventy-eight Passed Midshipmen; and, in the two years that followed, to not one,—notwithstanding that this list had been considerably diminished in the interim by promotion, death, and resignations. In 1836, but five officers received Lieutenant's commissions—and the next year, the Senate were called on to confirm the nomination of forty-nine. By the Register of 1827, it appears that from 1817 to 1825, only one Captain had been appointed in the Navy; whereas, in the last mentioned year, nine officers received the commissions of that rank. This list of officers received

* Then called Master and Commander.

* September, 1810.

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no accession to its numbers in 1830; in 1832 and '36, but one; and in 1837, TEN. During the years 1829 and '30, three, and in the next, *fifteen* Lieutenants were appointed Commanders. During the three years that followed, but one was appointed in each year; while in 1837, the number of promotions to the rank of Commander amounted to twenty.

It is in vain that we may look to the exigencies of the public service for the cause of such unequal rates of promotion, or of such fluctuations in the Navy. The history of the last twenty or twenty-five years does not show that any large fleets have been suddenly or unexpectedly fitted out, to call for such sudden and unequal accessions of numbers, first to one grade of officers and then to another. Neither does the policy of the nation at large, with regard to the Navy, appear so vacillating and undetermined, as to require promotion to be checked for years—again to go rapidly on—then stop—and again move on at such unequal paces. The explanation is to be found elsewhere, and the remedy in a law which shall fix and regulate the number of officers of each grade in the service. Referring again to statistics—for facts are worth a great deal—those that are furnished by the Navy Register will show, that of the three Presidents who have come into and gone out of power since the war, each one has given sufficient testimony by his acts, to warrant the assertion, that when he came into office he thought the Navy, as it then existed, ample for all the wants and purposes of the nation. Whereas, facts collected from the same source will also show, that each of the three, assisted by the lights of experience acquired in the chair of state—necessarily involving a more intimate acquaintance with the affairs of the Navy, and a more practical knowledge of its concerns than he before possessed—went out of office, convinced and persuaded, that true policy requires this arm of national defence to be strengthened. In proof of the first assertion, the number of commissioned officers in the Navy was more than doubled by these three Presidents. And, that each of the three was more in favor of an increase of the Navy when he went out, than he was when he came into office, the following facts will show. During the first seven years of his administration, Mr. Monroe recommended the appointment of but thirty-seven Lieutenants; and during the last year, above seventy-five; during the former period but three Captains, and in the latter, nine; and of the twenty-two Commanders commissioned by him, one third received their appointments in his last year alone.* In the first year of his term, Mr. Adams nominated but one officer for promotion to the rank of Captain, and not a single one to the rank of Commander; whereas, in his last year, he recommended to the Senate the appointment of five to the former, and ten to the latter. During the first and second years of the administration of General Jackson, only three, but in the last, *ten* Captains were added to the service; during his first year he advocated the appointment of but one officer to the rank of Commander and not one to that of Lieutenant; whereas, during the last, he nominated and promoted twenty to the former, and fifty to the latter rank. Indeed, Mr. Monroe, the year before he retired from office, urged upon the consideration of Congress, by message, the necessity of creating higher grades in the Navy; and recommended that the *minimum* number of officers in the different grades, should be so fixed by law, as to allow every vessel then in the Navy, her due quota. General Jackson, not long before he retired from the Presidential chair, advocated similar measures, and so also, I believe, did Mr. Adams.

So far then from having any system in the Navy, with regard to appointments and promotions—or any established and determinate rules, with regard to the number of officers, it appears that all is arbitrary. It is entirely subject to the control of Executive discretion, which, though dependent to some extent on the will of the Senate, may be exercised for good, or for evil.

It is to the practical effects of this discretionary power, that the service owes its retired list of officers called Passed Midshipmen and Passed Assistant Surgeons. In consequence of appointing more Midshipmen than it was afterwards judged expedient to promote, a list of upwards of two hundred officers has accumulated in the service, who, while they spend years in the prime of life, waiting for their turn in the wayward round of promotion, receive half the pay of Lieutenant, and are at an annual charge of $150,000 upon the treasury. So long as the President may appoint any number of Midshipmen, or nominate to the Senate any number of officers for commissions in the Navy, or at will refuse all such appointments, and withhold all such nominations; so long, it appears to me, Mr. Editor, will the Navy be unstable, and liable to have its proportion of officers sometimes far beyond, and at other times as far below, the true wants and necessities of the service. And for the same reasons, the service itself will fluctuate. One President giving it a motion of increase that will carry it as far above the mark of true economy, as, in the returning vibration, under another President, it will descend below the proper mark of true policy and wisdom. If, without any law on the subject, the Navy may be doubled in the course of three administrations, it may, by the same rule, go on to increase in geometrical progression under the next three, and at the end of the last of their terms, be again double its present

* Navy Register of 1827. Perhaps a few more promotions were made in the seven years, but they do not appear in this Register.

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size. Or it may decrease; and the decrease being in the ratio of the increase, the last of the next three Presidents may leave the Navy where Mr. Monroe found it in 1817. To go on building and launching men-of-war, when guns could not be procured to compose a battery for them, would, every one will admit, be an extreme of national folly and improvidence. Officers are quite as important and necessary as guns, to our men-of-war. Equally unwise and injudicious is it then, to go on building ships without regard to the one, as to the other. Nay, more unwise is it to neglect the officer, than the gun; for there is this difference between them—the latter may be cast and bored in a day; whereas, under the present system, years of previous training are required to make the former. If we suppose, that a law were passed to fix in each grade the number of officers at their present rate—having no regard to the number of ships in the Navy—and that the country were to find itself involved in war at any time thereafter, many of the best ships that we now have would be laid up for the want of officers. Nor could the number of Passed Midshipmen, of Lieutenants, Commanders or Captains, be increased with properly trained officers in a shorter period than six years; for six years, as you have seen, is the time required properly to train and prepare a Midshipman for the duties of a Lieutenant.

There is but one rule by which the proper number of officers for the Navy can be determined, and that rule is afforded by the number and size of the ships. There are sixty-odd of these in the Navy, which require so many guns, so many men, and so many officers. There is nothing arbitrary in the proportions of these. The number and size of the vessels to be equipped being known, the ratio of officers is as determinate as the ratio of guns or of men. If there be but three ships in the Navy, it would be a mark of folly and extravagance to maintain more officers in the employ of the government, than are required to perform the service connected with these three ships. But if, instead of three, there be a hundred vessels, equally short-sighted and reprehensible would be the policy of maintaining a corps of officers, barely sufficient to perform the duties connected with one half such number of ships. According to the Register of 1840, there are in the Navy sixty-five vessels of all classes, and seven Navy-Yards, besides Hospitals, Shipping Rendezvous, and other stations. The number and grades of the officers required to perform the duties of each ship, yard and station, are fixed by regulation;—and it should be enjoined upon the Executive as a duty, to regulate, conformably with this rule, the number of officers of each grade in the service.

Independent of giving to the Navy its proper proportions, the advantages of an arrangement to such an effect would be manifold and obvious. There could not then, as there may be now, an increase of the Navy, without the consent of Congress. Congress would first have to pass appropriations, and authorize the building of more ships, before any increase could take place among the officers. Thus, the Legislative Department would exercise a more wholesome and direct control over the Navy than it now does. The building of more ships, would by consequence involve the appointment of more young officers, and the promotion of old ones. The expenses, incident to such appointment and promotion, would of course constitute an item in the estimates submitted for new ships; and as a part of the costs involved in an appropriation, they would have to be authorized by both houses of Congress, before the President could appear before the Senate with a new batch of nominations, asking the consent of that body to increase promotions in the Navy. It is admitted, that under the regulations of such a law, there would be more officers in the Navy than are requisite merely to perform the service required of them in times of peace. But is not this the case with regard to the Army? Is it not the case with regard to the ships themselves? And does not the precept, 'in peace prepare for war,' necessarily involve the expense of making ready? In order that the Navy may have in all its parts, those proportions which will ensure to it strength and efficiency, we must either make officers to suit the number of ships, or destroy the ships to suit the number of officers—officers without ships being as useless as ships without officers. Common sense alone teaches that they are the true standards of each other. Our Commercial Marine keeps in constant training seamen more than enough to man all the ships that this nation will ever build. Not so of officers. They must undergo a peculiar system of previous training, that involves no inconsiderable expense, and requires a period of several years to complete the course. The largest ship may be built in a few months—a crew may be obtained for her in a day.* But a complement of well-trained and skilful officers for her, cannot be created by a stroke of the pen, or the driving of a bolt. Unless these be prepared beforehand, the ship must lie idle for years, waiting the tedious process of a nautical education. How these officers, in times of peace, when the services of this ship are not required, may be employed, profitably to themselves and advantageously to their country, has been shown in a former number.

When looking into the present condition of the Navy, the difficulty to be experienced in procuring officers for our ships, in case of war, cannot fail to present itself to every reflecting mind. That such a difficulty should exist; that the blun-

* In the French war, crews for our frigates were sometimes entered in the course of a few hours.—*Cooper's Naval History.*

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der should be committed of building ships, when, if they were put in commission to-morrow, the requisite number of well-trained officers could not be procured for them, is but one of the many apt, pointed and practical illustrations, Mr. Editor, that may be given, of the present mal-organization of the Navy. In any emergency which may call for the sudden equipment of all the vessels of the Navy, the list of Passed Midshipmen affords the only source from which a supply of properly drilled officers can be obtained. And this list would not be large enough to supply the demands in such a case. Fully to comprehend the impracticabilities in the way of resolving the grade of Passed Midshipmen into a perpetual corps of reserve, you must bear in mind that "this is a class of officers to whom" Rules and Regulations can assign "no particular duty." The plan of maintaining at public cost a large and numerous body of young officers, who have "no particular duty to perform," is in direct violation of the first principles of political economy, and cannot be too strongly reprobated. Independently of creating an expenditure that is worse than useless, the policy itself of such a measure is full of evil, and highly injurious both to the service and its officers. These young officers, after having proved themselves to be well-qualified for the duties of Lieutenants, are, in the prime of life, put upon half the pay of that grade. Thus, untimely forced upon a retired list, they fret out all the ardor of their youth, and fritter away the early vigor of manhood, waiting until misfortune and disgust, or until the more certain but tedious process of disease and death, shall make room for them in the ranks above. The number that is yearly added to this list, greatly exceeds the number that is yearly taken from it to supply promotion. Thus the chrysalis state of those who enter upon it, has been increased from immediate transition to a period of seven years duration, and is still on the increase. And here set it down as a rule—and mark its operation as a necessary evil of the present system—that so long as the supply exceeds the demand for officers, so long will there be an expensive accumulation of them, in some one grade or another, swelling its numbers out far beyond the just and efficient proportions. It is the practical operation of this rule, which, in less than twelve years, has increased the list of Passed Midshipmen from zero to two hundred and more—and, in less time than that, has created in the medical corps a similar grade, and made it equal in numbers to about one sixth of the whole medical staff of the Navy.

Under such a state of things, is it surprising that young officers should become tired of their position in the Navy; and at times evince a feeling of disgust, or manifest a disaffected spirit, towards a service in which they are thus dealt by! There is not one of them, whose heart has not been made sick with 'hope deferred.' Entering the Navy with an implied agreement, that, for six years of service faithfully performed on their part, they shall be rewarded with an epaulette—they are tantalized with mere tinsel, until another term, longer and more tedious than the first, be dragged out in restless servitude. A spirit of discontent has thereby been engendered in the Navy. In a Military corps, such a spirit is contagious; once abroad, its effects upon the general prosperity of the service, are not less deplorable—and far more blighting, than the ravages of pestilence. Though much of the discontent which at this time prevails in the Navy may be traced to this double-term of servitude as its origin, the evils of the plan have not been fully developed, nor as keenly felt as they will be; for hitherto, its *victims* have been somewhat buoyed with the hope that, during their term, they should see the Navy placed upon a firmer and a better footing. But the evil is not yet stayed.

Ask any officer for the result of his experience during his last cruise, and he will tell you, that of late years there has been a wonderful falling off among Midshipmen. That they are jejune to a degree; and, as a class, by no means as efficient, or as active in the performance of duty, as they were some years ago. That these things are so, is but the natural result of a very obvious cause, and may be set down as another of the evil effects of maintaining in the service a class of officers, to whom, 'no particular duty can be assigned.' Formerly, all the important duties and responsible trusts, which, on board a man-of-war, it often becomes necessary to assign to young officers, were assigned to Midshipmen—now, they are performed by Passed Midshipmen. In these duties, there was oftentimes enough of official compliment, or responsibility, to beget a noble spirit of emulation among the younger officers, and both to excite and to gratify, on their part, a high-toned feeling of professional pride. But now, all such duties and stations are monopolized by others, and nothing is left for the mere Midshipman to do, but the drudgery of his former duties—the tame routine of *tailing on* after-guard and mizen-top-men to the main brace; and conveying messages from the quarter-deck. The consequence is, that, when by default of Passed Midshipmen, the younger officers are called to perform the more important duties, they are at fault from inexperience. Instead, therefore, of the mere Midshipman feeling that he is of some consequence and importance on board ship, and that the services rendered by him are useful to the Navy, he finds that, under the present system, he is without the consciousness of any such incentive to spur him on. One great source of cheerfulness (and cheerfulness is no where to be more desired than in a man-of-war) is *useful* occupation, with the consciousness that one is advancing towards the object in view. Under the

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present arrangement, Midshipmen are deprived of many such incentives which they formerly enjoyed. And, is it not natural that, under such circumstances, many of them should become listless of duty, and contract habits of idleness and mental dissipation, which are so little to be desired for youth?

The human disposition is everywhere the same. When young men come out of our law-schools and medical colleges, with diplomas in hand, we find them ever eager to be engaged in the duties of their profession. We consider their impatience to enter upon the new calling, as an earnest of success; and we look upon their zeal, as a pledge of future usefulness and distinction. Should we expect a Midshipman, or the young Surgeon in the Navy, after having devoted six or eight years, instead of two or three, to the acquirement of his profession, to be less impatient than they, to enter upon his new field of duties? Are the allurements of promotion—the insignia of office, with all the pomp and circumstance of Naval life—less tempting to the young aspirant for military renown, than briefs and prescriptions are to raw surgeons and green barristers? Suppose that the law should forbid your doctors and lawyers to take out a license until six years after they had been graduates; think you, that under such a regulation, your physicians would be more skilful, or your jurists more profound, than they are? And yet, as preposterous and as absurd as such a law would be in the civil code, one similar to it in all respects is, at this moment, in force among the Midshipmen and Assistant Surgeons of the Navy. And its effects are obvious and most ruinous upon the service. Can it be expected that a body of young officers, ambitious as they should be of advancement by all honorable means, would be content to stop short in mid-career, and patiently endure, as Midshipmen are required to do, a professional syncope for years? After a Midshipman has undergone examination, and been found qualified for promotion, he is then put upon this retired list, without an incentive to call forth his energies, and with scarcely an object or an aim to give them direction. No exertion, however great or noble on his part, will push him forward, or hasten, for a single moment, the long-sought and yet distant promotion. He is sent back to the steerage, and is required to resume the boyish duties of Midshipman for seven years longer, and until casualties shall thin for him the ranks of his superior officers; then, and not till then, is he honored with promotion. Had an enemy designed to break down the spirit of the Navy, could any system have been devised which would prove more effectual than this is likely to do—this, which requires officers to spend the prime of their life, with 'no particular duty' before them, except that of 'waiting for dead men's shoes!' A commission in the Navy confers honor, and opens the way to distinction. And with the young Naval aspirant, a 'commission' has charms, that, in his eyes, make it more earnestly to be desired than the object of his first love. But at the very time when his ardor is most fervent, and his notions of chivalry are tuned to the highest pitch, his time-serving 'Uncle'—into whose service he has entered—gives him a Leah for a Rachel. Like Laban, he changes his wages, but more faithless, requires him to drag out another weary term of servitude before he is permitted to enjoy the object of his first ambition.

But as war is the great end for which the Navy is designed, it should be regulated in all things with a view to war. In times of peace, the proper consideration is, 'by what means may it be held in a state of the greatest readiness and efficiency, at the least expense?' Let us then suppose a state of war, that we may see how the Navy, with regard to officers alone, is prepared to meet it. With commissioned officers in service for but little more than half of our ships, all the ships in the Navy would be immediately launched and put in commission;—others, for which materials are already prepared, would be built and got ready for sea; and many of the fine packets and traders of our merchants might be bought, equipped and armed straightway, as corvettes, sloops-of-war, brigs, &c. Indeed, availing herself of the finest commercial marine in the world, the United States has the *materiel*—the ships and sailors—for fitting out a Navy, which would prove more destructive than that which any other nation could send out against the commerce of an enemy;—many of her merchant-ships are swifter than the fleetest men-of-war. But of what avail are all these resources—this multitude of ships and men—without officers? Her list of two hundred Passed Midshipmen, if promoted to-morrow, would not afford a due quota of officers for all the ships that are now in the Navy; nor could the number of regular officers that are yearly trained for the Navy, be increased in a shorter period than six years. Where then, in such an event, are officers to be procured for our ships? The only resource, at *present*, would be among the mates and skippers of merchant-craft—a class of recruits less to be desired for the Navy, and far more inefficient, than would be a reinforcement to an army of raw militia, commanded by officers who had never fired a musket or fixed a bayonet.

Possessing then a Navy so abundant in all the resources of *materiel*, does it not become a national desideratum of the first importance, to endow it with commensurate resources with regard to officers? Its powers of expansion should be the same in every department. If ships and men may be increased almost *ad libitum*, government should possess the means of creating officers *pari passu*. These means are to be derived from the school-ship, in the manner proposed for creating a body of

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well-trained officers to constitute a *corps of reserve* for the Navy. Supposing this plan immediately to be put into operation, its first fruits would not be given to the world till after the lapse of six years. Millions are yearly spent on the Navy—the object of which is to give security to American commerce—and millions of that commerce are yearly lost from improper management and bad navigation on the part of those who conduct it; and surely no measure could be more national in its objects, or philanthropic in its results, than one which should have for its aim the creating of a corps of well-trained and skilful officers, who should serve the double purpose of conducting that commerce safely in peace, and of protecting and defending it valiantly in war. If it be admitted that Midshipmen during their apprenticeship, (and many whose opinions are entitled to weight maintain that they do,) render a *quid pro quo*, independent of their prospective value as commissioned officers, then this corps of reserve may be created and maintained ever afterwards in training for the Navy, without the cost of a single dollar to the public treasury. The number of "young gentlemen" necessary to the proper performance of duty on board any ship-of-war, is far greater than that which is required merely to fill up the vacancies that may occur within any reasonable time, among the commissioned officers of that ship. Thus, the complement of commissioned officers for a frigate, is a Captain and four or five Lieutenants—the complement of Midshipmen, fifteen or twenty. When I entered the service, the usual quota of the last was between thirty and forty. Now, supposing the number of officers in each grade to be fixed by law, so as to allow every ship in the Navy her war-complement of officers—supposing also the ratio which at present exists between the Midshipmen and Lieutenants of a frigate, to be the true proportion which ought to be maintained between these two grades in the service—then every Midshipmen would, under such an arrangement, have to outlive the Naval existence of at least three Lieutenants before he could expect promotion,—a period, the average duration of which would far exceed that wholesome term of apprenticeship, which, in the opinion of military men, is necessary and proper to the profession of arms. To be qualified for this profession, is clearly the object of the indenture by which our youth first become bound, as Midshipmen, in the service of their country. And when they are so qualified, good faith and true policy require that they should be allowed to doff the badge of apprenticeship, to put on the insignia of a higher order, and be regularly advanced to the next degree in their craft; for it is as little to be expected as it is to be desired, that the apprentice to so noble a calling as that of arms, would be content to remain in the humble capacity of Midshipman during the average period of three Naval lives. Unless, therefore, a field out of the Navy be opened to the surplus officers, we should in a few years find them, even under this supposed arrangement, again accumulating—becoming in a short time sufficiently numerous to create a peculiar interest, and to command influence in the lobbies of our legislative halls. And thus we should again have the service burthened, as we now have it, with a non-descript class of officers (with this difference however, the last would be worse and more injurious than the first) sowing broadcast its seeds of discord and insubordination among all grades. One discontented spirit at sea is enough to destroy the peace and harmony of a whole ship's crew, and sometimes even to threaten the safety of the ship herself. What then, among a corps of little more than a thousand officers, are two hundred and twenty discontented spirits—nearly one-fourth of the whole Navy proper—impatient for promotion—tired and disgusted, even to loathing, of the tameness of a situation in which they have "no particular duties" to perform! This list is the growth of only a few years, and is rapidly increasing. If the system which nourishes it be persevered in, who so blind that he cannot foresee some of the national evils which will arise from the corrupting influences of masses of such spirits, continually accumulating and festering on their corps, with all the indiscretion and ardor of youth upon them! Who has set bounds to their numbers! Or where is the law that has fixed a limit to their growth! Like the gourd of the prophet, this body of officers has sprung up in the night; and, like that gourd, it cherishes a worm that is preparing to smite and wither the strong 'right arm' of this good people. Let those describe who may, the dangerous and ruinous tendency of the policy which created and would maintain such grades of officers in the Navy. Suffice it to say, that its malign influences may be neutralized—nay, more—individual grievances and a public evil may be converted into personal benefits and national advantages, by opening from the school-ship a safety valve, by which all the young officers, who are not immediately required for the Naval, might escape into the merchant, service of their country—there to acquire, in their peaceful pursuits, all the experience of the most skilful seamen. Trading to every part of the world, their military education in the school-ship would enable them to acquire a fund of information, not accessible to regular Navy officers, concerning the ports, harbors, and resources of all nations, that in war would prove invaluable. Should the practice of warring (*not privateering*) upon commerce be continued among maritime nations at war, this 'corps of reserve,' with the well-established reputation of American merchantmen for fast sailing, would place it in the power of the United States to sweep from the ocean the commerce of an enemy; and therefore tend to secure the continuance of peace by making her so formi-

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dable an enemy. For the destruction of commerce, a small vessel is as efficient as a large one. Strength to overcome merchantmen, with fleetness to come up with them, and to escape from larger men-of-war, are the requisites to be sought in vessels for this purpose; and the merchant service affords many such, which, with such a corps of officers to draft from, the United States could arm, man, and send to sea by scores. At the cessation of hostilities, these vessels could be again sold as merchantmen; and these officers, if not from choice, could readily be induced again to enter the merchant service: and thus the Navy would at once, and without difficulty, fall back upon its former economical peace establishment.

Not the least recommendation in favor of such an arrangement in the school-ship, nor the least important among the national advantages to be thence derived, would be the bold and noble stand which that arrangement would enable this country to take against that most ancient and barbarous practice of *privateering*, in war. In the early infancy of the Republic, it was the opinion of Dr. Franklin, and American statesmen generally, that "the United States are better situated than any other nation to profit by privateering." And though that great and good man was in favor of its immediate abolition at that time, and actually made efforts, in all the treaties at which he assisted, to have a clause inserted to that effect;* yet legislators, the scope of whose benevolence is less like the light of Heaven, have generally, on the grounds of expediency, refrained from pursuing the noble policy thus early set on foot. But these grounds can no longer be urged. We were then weak—now we are strong. American commerce was then making its first venture abroad on feeble wings—now it is full-fledged, sailing before every breeze that ripples on the ocean. And the United States now, so far from being in a condition to *profit*, have more to lose, and less to gain, than any other nation, by privateering. With more tonnage than any other nation, (one excepted,) and, in proportion to resources, with fewer fortified harbors, and a smaller Navy to give convoy and protection to its vessels, the commerce of the United States, both at home and abroad, would now be peculiarly obnoxious to this species of warfare. Its rich cargoes and defenceless state would not fail to excite foreign cupidity; and, in themselves, these two conditions would draw forth swarms of private armed cruisers seeking to plunder it. In a maritime war with any other country, except England, the odds against the United States would be fearful: for the commerce of the enemy being limited, and ours extensive, he would have little, and we much, to lose by privateering.

* The 23d article of the treaty of 1785 with Prussia, stipulates, that, in case of war, "neither of the contracting powers shall grant or issue any commission to any private armed vessel," &c.

"We learn from the monuments of antiquity," some one has said, "that the first laws had scarcely any other origin than custom; which is often a wretched master." The practice of privateering, and many of the usages connected with it in modern warfare, are relics of the barbarous ages, when piracy was a boast, and robbery on the high seas was considered a most honorable occupation. Among the Greeks it was an honor to be successfully engaged in robberies at sea. As late as the ninth century, Boucher says—"All mariners were a set of robbers." Dr. Franklin described privateering in war, as "a remnant of the ancient piracy;" and, in a letter to Mr. Oswald, thus alludes to it, and the evils of it. "If rapine is abolished, one of the encouragements to war is taken away, and peace, therefore, more likely to continue, and be lasting. The practice of robbing merchants on the high seas, *a remnant of the ancient piracy*, though it may be accidentally beneficial to particular persons, is far from being profitable to all engaged in it, or to the nation that authorizes it. In the beginning of a war, some rich ships, not on their guard, are surprized and taken. This encourages the first adventurers to fit out more armed vessels, and many others to do the same. But the enemy, at the same time, become more careful, arm their merchant ships better, and render them not so easy to be taken: they go also more under the protection of convoys. Thus, while the privateers to take them are multiplied, the vessels subject to be taken, and the chances of profit are diminished, so that many cruises are made wherein the expenses average the gains; and, as is the case in other lotteries, though particulars have got prizes, the mass of adventurers are losers—the whole expense of fitting out all the privateers, during war, being much greater than the whole amount of goods taken. Then, there is the national loss of all the labor of so many men during the time they have been employed in robbing—who, besides spending what they get, in riot, drunkenness and debauchery, lose their habits of industry, are rarely fit for any sober business after peace, and serve only to increase the number of highwaymen and housebreakers. Even the undertakers, who have been fortunate, are, by sudden wealth, led into expensive living, the habit of which continues when the means of supporting it cease, and finally ruins them—a just punishment for their having wantonly and unfeelingly ruined many honest, innocent traders and families, whose subsistence was obtained in serving the common interests of mankind."

"It is cowardly," observes a French writer, "for its object is to attack the unarmed. It is odious, for it has no other principle than a base self-interest. It is barbarous, for the flying merchantman is compelled to submit, by murderous broadsides."

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Martens thus expresses his opinion of it—"Indifferent to the fate of the war, and often of his country, the privateersman has no other inducement but the love of gain—no other recompense but his captures and the prizes conferred by the state on his privileged piracies. To encourage individuals to fit out privateers at considerable expense, it is necessary to present them the allurements of a rich booty; and by prescribing them a moderation which they are fully determined not to observe, it is necessary not to intimidate them, by imposing on them too many restrictions."

Nor ought the testimony given on this subject by the excellent Clarendon, to be overlooked. When, in 1664, great inducements were held out by Charles II to his subjects, for fitting out privateers against the Dutch, that wise Chancellor thus testifies to the evils which they carry with them—"It was resolved that all possible encouragement should be given to privateers; that is, to as many as would take commissions from the Admiral, to send out *vessels-of-war*, as they call them, to take prizes from the enemy; which no articles or obligations can restrain from all the villainy they can act, and are a people, how countenanced soever, or thought necessary, that do bring an unavoidable scandal, and, it is to be feared, a curse upon the justest war that was ever made at sea. Besides the horrible scandal and clamor that this class of men brought upon the King and the whole government for defeat of justice, the prejudice which resulted from thence to the public, and to the carrying on the service, is unspeakable. *All seamen run to them.* And though the King now assigned an ample share of all the prizes taken by his own ships, to the seamen, over and above their wages, yet there was a great difference between the condition of the one and the other. In the King's fleet they might gain well, but they were sure of blows;—nothing could be got there without fighting. With the privateers there was rarely fighting. They took all who could make little resistance, and fled from all who were too strong for them. And so these fellows were always well-manned, *when the King's ships were compelled to stay many days for the want of men, who were raised by pressing, and with great difficulty.*"

Similar would be the effects upon the American Navy of this species of warfare at this time. The well-known enterprise of our citizens, and their fondness for privateering,* would cause hundreds of their ships, interrupted in commerce, to be fitted out as private-armed cruisers. The inducements held out by these, would entice seamen away from the ships of the Navy, as Clarendon informs us they did from the King's ships, and as we know was the case in the war of 1812–'14. Each vessel acting separately and independently of the rest, would enfeeble, instead of strengthen, the maritime resources of the country. During our last war, Commodore Stewart thus wrote to a Committee of Congress: "Many (seamen) are in private armed ships and privateers, owing to the *exclusive advantages given them over the Navy.* By this means, the glory and maritime reputation of the nation is made to yield to the inglorious warfare of plunder, which deeply affects some individuals of the enemy, but makes only a small impression upon the nation at large." Now, by training officers in the school-ship, after the manner proposed, for the merchant service, the power and the means would be conferred upon the government of investing these same vessels with a more noble character. By putting them under the command of its own officers, they would constitute an important part of the great national marine; and by acting in concert with the regular Naval forces, they would serve mightily to strengthen our means of offence as well as of defence.

But there are higher considerations than those of mere State policy, which urge to the abandonment of this species of warfare. Justice, morality, and religion, are opposed to and condemn it. For centuries back, up to our own day, good men from the chair of state, the cloister and the bench, have been heard, from time to time, raising their voices to rebuke it. Thus, St. Augustin in his *Canon Militare*—"militare non est delictum, sed propter prædam militare, peccatum est." And Grotius—"to put men to death for the sake of perishable and uncertain possessions, is irreconcilable with charity." "Most certain," says Molloy, in his treatise of 1676, *De Jure Maritimo*—"these sorts of capers, or privateers, being instruments found out but of later ages, and it is well known by whom,* it were well they were restrained by consent of all Princes; since all good men account them but one remove from pirates—who, without any respect for the cause, or having any injury done them, or so much as hired for the service, spoil men and goods, making even a trade and calling of it, amidst the calamities of war."

Soccenius, from his Academic pursuits at Upsal, raised his voice in not less emphatic terms—"When a Naval war is unavoidable, it is far better to assail the enemy with domestic levies under officers and discipline, than to give license to pirates, the vilest of mankind—who, once authorized to plunder, soon forget all restraint, and spare not even friends, nor those who have never injured them, or their employers." In the last war ships were fitted out

* The passion for privateering was so strong at one time in the New-England States, that agriculture was abandoned to pursue it.—*Robert Morris.*

I do not wish to see a new Barbary in America. I fear lest our privateering success in the two last wars, should already have given our people too strong a relish for that most mischievous kind of gaming mixed with blood.—*Dr. Franklin*, 1783.

* The Prince of Orange in his war with the Netherlands, though some writers trace them back much further.

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in our own ports, and sent to sea to cruise as English privateers against American commerce. Where is the hand that shall draw on the ocean, for seamen let loose to plunder, the line between glory and honor on one side, and rapine and murder on the other? In 1744, the question was mooted in France—"Would it not be possible to revive the ancient custom of commercial truces, and to make war without involving in it commerce and mercantile navigation?" And at a later day, Dr. Franklin (who cannot be too often quoted) said—"This will be a happy improvement in the law of nations. The humane and the just cannot but wish success to the proposition." "Without such a check," wrote Capt. Spence, United States Navy, to the Governor of Porto-Rico, in 1822, "what is there to limit the mischief done by men of this order, who, stealing from their dens and lurking places, pollute the ocean with the blood of defenceless sailors, and gorge their cupidity with the spoils of plunder and ravage? The good of every nation, *and the honor of some*, require that so foul a system should be made to cease, that every navigable sea may be rendered safe to the honest efforts of enterprise."

On the land, the property of unresisting citizens is considered sacred by the conqueror;—on the water, it is the property of him that can seize it. The half-unladen ship that lies along side of the wharf in your river is prize to the captor; but the part of her cargo that lies *on* that wharf, and along side of the ship, neither sailor nor soldier can touch. What would not only we, but all Christendom, say of an enemy, who should issue commissions to private adventurers for entering our territory by armed bands, that they might pillage and rob, for their own profit, our citizens engaged in their peaceful and honest pursuits? What constitutes this difference between the property of citizens in storehouses and in ships? Are the pursuits of commerce less peaceful, or are its results less beneficial to the general welfare, than agriculture or manufactures? The same code which forbids the citizens of neighboring nations at war, to make excursions into the enemy's territory for the sake of murder and pillage, ought also to forbid it on the ocean—the common highway of the world. And, as pertinently asked by Linguet, "Whence comes this difference between fleets and armies, squadrons and regiments, corsairs and hussars!"

The practice is as demoralizing, and as much to be deprecated, on the water as it is on the land. We judge of men's actions by the motive; and 'what motive has the privateersman but plunder?' Could inquiry ascertain, it would be curious and interesting to know what effects privateering, in the contest between Spain and her American dependencies, had in bringing about the system of piracy that was established about that time in the West-Indies, and broken up at such cost to the Navy. Vessels, equipped for privateers in war, offer, at the cessation of hostilities, a ready means for another and a worse species of robbery; and, by acting on the cupidity of the dissolute, they do, no doubt, often present temptations not easily to be overcome.* With the dissolute and vicious—those whose notions with regard to 'meum and tuum' are vague—there is but a step from the privateer to the pirate. The demoralizing influences of the former fit them for the work, and prepare them to make the change of character with a bold and reckless mind. And between the two in war, 'the land and the sea send forth their reports of murders and piracies and daring robberies, as if the outcasts of society had become emulous of glory, and resolved to hide disgrace in the magnitude of crime!'†

It is true, we are indebted to American privateers in the last war for many brilliant achievements. The old Teazer, and the young Teazer; and after her loss, the old Teazer's ghost, and many others, did yeoman's service—they were both a terror and a dread to English ship-owners. The graceful fall and glorious ruin of the General Armstrong privateer, have made her famous in song and in story. But the gallant spirits and noble deeds which adorn the annals of American privateering, should not blind our minds, or warp our judgments, with regard to the immoral influences, the individual calamities and the national evils attendant upon it. In the meleé for plunder, who shall say to the cruelty of avarice—"It is enough; stay thy hand!" The evil consequences of it spring up as we go; and you and your readers, Mr. Editor, need not the hand of another to point them out.

It is not consistent with the object of this paper to discuss more at large the practice of privateering, or to point out the course to be taken for its suppression. Enough has been said to show that it is a general evil and a national sin; and that the taking of effective measures for the abolition of it, would, first of all, confer upon us as a people the proud satisfaction of diminishing the calamities of war. In the next place, it would add to the security at sea of the life and property of peaceful citizens, by clearing out from the ocean, those swarms of *sea-beggars* (*gueux de mer*) that live by plunder and prey upon commerce. It would make doubly formidable in war the 'right arm of the na-

* The four pirates who were executed at Boston in 1819, confessed that they had served in privateers. So had the notorious Gibbs, I believe.

† See a most valuable paper by an American citizen, on privateering, presented to the 16th Congress, 2nd session; and entitled "An appeal to the Government and Congress of the United States, against the depredations committed by American privateers on the commerce of nations at peace with us:" 1819. Those who wish to see a masterly exposition of the evils attendant upon privateering, are referred to that paper, which has been of great assistance to the writer on the present occasion.

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tion:' and by lessening for our commerce the risks of capture, it would prove for the nation both a tower of strength and a fortress of defence. The vast numbers of seamen swallowed up in the business of privateering, would then be reserved for more national purposes, and more honorable warfare, in the Navy. And the officers in the merchant service, who had been trained in the schoolship, would, at such a time, constitute a most valuable 'corps of reserve,' which would be sufficient to furnish officers enough for those seamen, and for as many of our fast-sailing merchant vessels as the government should deem it expedient to buy and equip as men-of-war.

But, let us turn from remedies to the disease, that we may fully understand the present condition of our Naval system, before we proceed to consider by what means its wonted health and strength and vigor may be restored. The court-martial code, and the administration of the law, will be found no less defective than other parts of the system.

There is at this time in the United States, a junior officer, who has come thousands of miles, from a foreign station, for the purpose of bringing to trial the Captain of an American man-of-war who is charged with high misdemeanors. His accuser is operated upon by no selfish considerations, or motives of personal animosity. He is actuated solely by his love of order and of morals, and by his zeal for the service. The months that have elapsed, since his arrival, too plainly intimate the impotency of outraged laws under an evil system. His efforts to sustain good morals and law in the Navy, bid fair to prove as fruitless at home as they have done abroad. There, he is said to have pointed out, to the commander of the squadron, this offender wallowing drunk in the streets. But the commander refused to take cognizance of the offence. He, whose duty it is to sustain the law, and who connives at the infraction of it, becomes, to all intents and purposes, an aider and an abettor of crime. And, under a well-regulated system, would not this officer be relieved from his command, and put upon trial with the other?

It has been stated in the public prints, and the statement has not been contradicted—the report too is current among Navy officers, and generally believed by them—that the commander of another public vessel, in mere wantonness, tarred and feathered one of his crew. The sailor has learned, by painful experience, that there is no law under the present system, to protect his person from violence, or his rights from outrage; for justice has not been allowed to put forth her hand upon this officer. I do not know that the proper authorities have received *official* representations of this transaction.* It is probable they have not; for those who witnessed the act were young officers, and they had too much reason to believe that representations by them, in this, as they had done in other cases, would prove worse than useless. Respectable public journals have assayed to call the attention of the proper authorities to the offences of this officer. And are statements, coming from such a source, nothing? Do not the well-being of the community in which you live, and the wholesome administration of your municipal laws, require the constituted authorities to take cognizance of outrage and crime, through what channel soever the perpetration of them is brought to their knowledge? With you, the offender is apprehended and brought to punishment, both as an example and a terror to evil doers. Not so with us in the Navy, when the offenders are Captains. The grounds were boldly taken, and openly maintained, years ago, in a Naval court, that laws were not made to be held as rods over Captains in the Navy. What was then dogma has since become doctrine with some, and bids fair to be engrafted upon the Naval code as a fixed principle of law. We have fallen upon evil times—for we have come to that pass in the Navy, when its statutes are looked upon as mere sayings, and the law has ceased to consider those of a high and of low degree with its boasted impartiality. The difficulty of bringing officers of rank in the Navy to trial, has passed into a proverb. And in this fact is to be found an explanation for the frequency of trials by courts-martial, held of late in the Navy.

Under this much abused and faulty system, young officers are arraigned and brought to trial upon charges, in some instances, altogether *frivolous* and *vexatious*. Officers of rank, who are notorious offenders, but cannot be brought to trial, are to be found bringing in their bills of indictment against their juniors for the most petty and trivial offences. At their instance, courts-martial are unhesitatingly ordered. The officer who is said to have tarred and feathered one of his crew, has brought two young officers to trial in the course of a few months.* Change the case, and let a young officer accuse one of this favored class; and a trial is out of the question, or hedged about with difficulties which only public opinion oft expressed can break down. The proceedings of the court-martial that is freshest in the minds of your readers, afford cases in point—for it is not necessary to go far back in search of examples. Before that court, a junior officer was tried upon charges preferred by an officer of rank—and an officer of rank was tried upon charges alleged by young officers. The last had been endeavoring for years to bring their superior

* We are credibly informed, that three sets of charges have been lodged against this officer.—*Ed.*

* Not that these officers ought not to have been tried, or that the crimes of the superior will justify the offences of the inferior. 'It is a shining mark that makes the bright example,' whether for good or for evil. And there is a peculiar unfitness in one, with an *unplucked beam*, to be picking at his *brother's mote*.

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officer to trial—first, through the regularly constituted authorities—then, through Congress—and, as a last resort, through the force of public opinion, operated upon by statements in the newspapers. After so much difficulty—enough, but for the extraordinary character of the personalities involved, to have insured for the accused perpetual immunity from the law—a tardy and reluctant trial was granted; charges and specifications were proved; the accused was found guilty, and sentenced accordingly.

Now turn we to the other case before the same court. An officer of rank imagines that his dignity is insulted by a junior. He arrests the latter on the spot, and instantly demands that he shall be arraigned before a court-martial, and there be made to answer for the offence. A trial is forthwith granted. Not a charge or specification is proved;—and the accused is honorably acquitted by the court. His accuser, at the very time that he is arraigning this young officer for a fancied infraction of law, has, himself, charges of a grave character floating against him. His offences have come to the knowledge of the proper authorities. But he is of the favored class, and the law proves a dead letter in his case. His accusers are not actuated by motives of personal hostility, as the accusers in the other case were. They have made known his offences to the authorities whose duty it is to take cognizance of them. In this they have done their duty, and there the matter rests. Although this officer has added to his other offences the guilt of arraigning before a military tribunal a brother-officer on false charges, he still goes unwhipped of justice.

Do not these facts indicate that the laws of the Navy are kept in two phials—one of which is closely sealed, and seldom permitted to be opened—the other, large-mouthed and convenient, ready at all times with its wrath to be emptied out upon the younger, and therefore the weaker and more frail, members of the corps? Within the last five or six years, but two officers of rank have been brought to trial in the Navy. In both cases, their offences were officially represented to the proper authorities, who declined to take cognizance of them—in both cases, young officers were the accusers—in both cases, trials were obtained only through the force of public opinion, to which the parties aggrieved appealed as a dernier resort—and, in both cases, the accused were found guilty, and punishments were awarded. But in both cases, such were the difficulties of opening the sealed phial, that, had not personal insults and injuries of an extraordinary character inflamed the minds of the accusers, and impelled them on to 'leave no stone unturned' in *their* efforts to be avenged, the outraged laws would have remained sealed up as a dead letter to this day; and their vengeance would never have been let loose upon the guilty heads of the offenders.

Allusion has been made to these cases, not from any ungenerous motive or unkind feeling towards the officers concerned, but for the purpose of properly illustrating the defects of a system, under which we, they, and the Navy, are laboring. Under an imperfect and defective system of jurisprudence, reason teaches us to expect an imperfect and defective administration of law; and the history of the recent courts-martial exemplifies still further the defective manner in which the laws of the Navy are administered. Let us take for illustration, because the most recent, the facts furnished by the proceedings of the courts, that, within the last twelve months have been convened in the United States, for the trial of commissioned officers of the Navy. Two of these cases have been already cited. The other two were of junior officers. One of them was arraigned upon the broad and open grounds, that he had offended against good morals and the law. He was tried, found guilty, and punished. The other, as in the case before cited, had disturbed his Captain's bile, and therefore he was guilty, in the opinion of his accuser, of a grave and serious offence in military law; and (poor fellow—*requiescat in pacem!* a more correct officer or a better man never lived) if suffered to go unpunished for such an act, he would, according to his accuser, destroy the morals of the Navy, trample the law and his superior officers under foot, and bring irretrievable ruin upon the whole service. A trial was granted without difficulty, and here is an extract from the finding of the court.

"The court, after mature deliberation, find the accused, Lieutenant ———, *not* guilty of the charges exhibited against him by Commander ———. Nor are the second specifications proved, except such parts of them only which relate to his having written the several letters appended to the proceedings; and they do therefore *honorably* acquit him. And the court are further of opinion, that the charges and specifications are FRIVOLOUS and VEXATIOUS; inasmuch as after having kept Lieutenant ——— suspended from duty for nearly three months, and voluntarily restoring him to duty, to bring these charges against him for the offence, for which he had already been TOO SEVERELY PUNISHED. And the court would respectfully call the attention of the Honorable Secretary of the Navy, to the very loose and irrelevant manner in which the various specifications are drawn up; so that it has been with the greatest difficulty the court have been able to separate the superfluous matter with which they are surrounded."

An officer, like Cæsar's wife, should not only be free from guilt, but above the suspicion of it. Like her's, his character is tainted by the charge. And when he is falsely accused, the simple finding of '*not* guilty' does not wipe away the stain. Who of your readers, Mr. Editor, if falsely in-

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dicted for crime, and publicly arraigned as a culprit on the criminal's bench, would consider the cold verdict of *not* guilty, enough to return his good name to him as spotless and as unsullied as before? Does your law overlook false imprisonment and malicious prosecution; and, in such a case, would it afford the citizen no redress? When an officer is arraigned before a court-martial for neglect of duty, and for conduct unbecoming the character of an officer and a gentleman, it is primâ facie evidence (for it is a court *martial*, and not a court of *enquiry*,) that he has laid himself liable to the charge, and therefore in the minds of the many, the stains of guilt are upon him. And the finding of *not* guilty does not wipe them away. Is it nothing to be falsely accused? Was it nothing that this officer, who had done no wrong, should have been confined for months in a floating cell; and in the language of his judges, TOO SEVERELY PUNISHED; and that too in *advance*, upon charges which the court were constrained to pronounce altogether *frivolous* and *vexatious*? Would not the laws of a healthful code, faithfully and impartially administered, require that this Commander should have been arraigned in turn, upon charges of cruelty and oppression, and been made to answer before that very tribunal for falsely and maliciously accusing a brother-officer?

The court-martial code in the Navy is so vague and imperfect in many respects, that entire proceedings are by no means unfrequently vitiated and set aside on account of informality. And in this way the guilty sometimes escape.

Laws that are defective, or only partially administered, beget offenders; and those that are unwise in their provisions create abuses. And, that we may still further illustrate the necessity there is for revising the present Naval code, turn we now from the dead letter of the law, and unpunished crime, to point out abuses that are practised according to law. It is lawful in the Navy, to receive on board, and to carry from place to place in our men-of-war, gold, silver, jewels and the like; and it is also lawful for the Commanders to charge and receive as pay, a per-centage for thus lending to the property of the citizen, (for merchantmen can transport it as well,) the security afforded by the national character of public vessels. The merchants of the Spanish American republics, make their remittances to this country and to England mostly in bullion. Owing to the unstable condition of the governments under which they live, the private property, both of residents and citizens, often becomes unsafe in its place of deposite on shore. Hence, plate and bullion find their way, in large amounts, on board of the public vessels sent to cruise in the waters of those countries. For thus receiving this property in a secure place of deposit, a per-centage of one or two dollars in the hundred is levied upon it, as the Captain's perquisite. Ships of war are maintained at the public expense, and for the general welfare. They are sent abroad to maintain that respect among others which is due to their nation; to promote the interests of commerce; and to give protection to the rights and property of the citizen engaged in his lawful pursuits. If then, in conformity with any one of these objects, the officer be required to receive on board the public armed vessel, the property of the citizen, when presented in the shape of gold and silver, it is his *duty* to receive it, and to afford it all the security his vessel can give. And those wholesome principles of the law which requires him to give convoy and protection to the private property of the citizen, in the form of ships and their cargoes, and *forbids* him to charge or receive any thing whatever for so doing, obtain with as much force in this case as in that. It is as much his duty to protect the property of the citizen in the one shape as in the other. He is employed by government to do his duty, and to it alone he should look for compensation. If the perquisite be allowed on the grounds, that to receive and transport specie in a man-of-war be extra service for the Captain, it is also extra service for the other officers and the crew by whom the labor is performed—and they too, should be entitled to extra compensation. If the service be attended with any dangers, hardships or privations, as it frequently is, all are alike exposed to them—and the laws which govern in the case of salvage, and in the distribution of prize-money, ought also to obtain here.

But as unjust as the present law is, its injustice is nothing in comparison with the abuses to which it gives rise, and the evils which it entails upon the Navy. Perquisites of office, in most cases, tend to abuse—and in this, the allurements held out to the officer, by the prospect of private gain, often lead him from the direct path of duty, into abuses, of the nature and extent of which none but those who have cruised in the Pacific, and have seen for themselves, can form proper conceptions. Money for transportation may be sometimes offered at the North, when duty, the interest of government, and the welfare of its citizens, all require the presence of the officer with his ship at the South. But the amount thus offered may reach one or two millions—and some ships have obtained greater sums. The Captain's per-centage will nett him $10,000 or $50,000—the trip may be made in two or three months—he is thousands of miles from home—and, although we are taught, from infancy up, to pray, "lead us not into temptation," here it is presented in the most glittering and seductive shape. In less than two years in the Pacific, one officer is said to have realized $100,000 from this perquisite alone. And others have made large sums—some thirty, some forty, and some sixty thousand dollars. This source of gain is not as fruitful to the officer now,

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as it has been; yet it is sufficiently lucrative, especially on the Pacific station, to give rise to evils that ought not to be. If it be expedient to charge freight for the transportation of money in our public vessels, the proceeds ought to go into the hospital or some other fund—and not into the pockets of individuals.

By what rule the present number of officers has been assigned to the several grades in the Navy, I have never been able to discover. The number of juniors is independent of the number of seniors; and neither has any relation to the number of ships. The due proportions, between the *materiel* and *officiel* of a Navy, are governed by certain laws, and are as easily to be determined as the ratio between any known quantities in mathematics. By failing to observe these proportions, the history of the Republic shows that one reduction of its Navy has already been considered necessary, and has actually taken place. And, after an interval of forty years, the time is once more at hand, when reorganization according to these rules, or reduction again *ad libitum*, is required. Navy officers and men-of-war, like quantities in Algebra, constitute an equation in the national marine, by which the value of all other of its parts may be determined; and according to which the acts of the government with regard to its Navy ought always to be regulated. But, hitherto, government has acted in the matter, neither in conformity with the doctrines of numbers, nor the rules of quantity. By improper, and therefore injudicious alterations and substitutions, transposition and elimination, the proportions of the great equation have been destroyed. And now, that it is required to clear it up, it becomes necessary to know what is the proper value of every term and part, and what are the just and natural proportions between its members, before the process by which the desired equality is to be restored, can be known. Wise men and the public interest alone can determine what that process shall be—whether subtraction on one side, or addition on the other. If by the former, let ships be sold, or sunk, or burned, (as said before) till the Navy, as it now is, can afford to each ship that remains, her due quota of officers. If by the latter, then let the number of officers be increased, until every ship be provided with her due complement. Whether by increase, or diminution, this is the standard to which the Navy must be brought at last. And, until the practical adoption of this standard, the Navy will be unstable—as liable to unhealthy increase at one time, as to unwholesome stagnation at another. There can be no time more propitious than the present, for the introduction of such a system. Bad management and injudicious legislation have reduced the Navy to a state of confusion and disorder never before witnessed. A thorough overhauling is rendered necessary to save it from ruin—its officers and their country from dishonor and disgrace.

The public expenditure incident to such an overhauling, and to the consequent increase of the Navy, would swell the aggregate of the annual Naval appropriations but little, if any, above their present ratio. In 1837-'38, a law was passed to authorize a squadron of armed ships to be maintained in service along the Atlantic sea-board, but the law has never been carried into effect. The duties of the Revenue service, which is now a separate corps supported at an annual cost to the public of $200,000, or $300,000, might be transferred to this squadron, with the most beneficial results, both on the score of economy and efficiency. This service consists of fifteen vessels and seventy-odd Captains and Lieutenants, whose salary, in gross, may be stated at $70,000; all of which, by transferring its duties to the Navy in the manner proposed, would be saved. Besides protection of the revenue, this arrangement would give constant and useful employment to nearly one hundred Lieutenants in the Navy. Moreover, if the necessary number of steamers and officers proper to be maintained in the Navy were put in commission, the expense of the Revenue service might be entirely dispensed with; for those steamers, without the additional cost of a dollar, might perform all the duties of the Revenue service, and, in doing this, they would the more completely subserve the purposes of the government, by affording useful occupation to a large number of the officers, who otherwise would be without it. Such service would make them familiar with the bars and channels, and teach them to become pilots of our own ports and harbors; an accomplishment which, in the exigencies of war, often proves of the first importance to the Navy officer.

The enormous rate at which work is done for the Navy, may fairly be charged as another evil of the present system. The experience of every officer, who has had an opportunity of judging, will confirm the statement, that the cost of work at the public dock-yards greatly exceeds the cost of similar work at private ship-yards. In some instances the expense is *many* times greater. The schooner Pilot was built at a Navy-Yard. She cost the government $33,000, and was sold before she had performed her first cruise, for $3000, (I *think*). The schooner Active, bought to supply the Pilot's place, (and there was no material difference in the size of these two vessels) cost $8,000. She was taken forthwith to the New-York Navy-Yard, and repaired at the cost of $13,700. She was further repaired at Norfolk, the cost of which is not known. And without having been to sea, she was sold, after receiving all these repairs, for $4,500.

Such are the effects of the system adopted, that it has induced the mechanics of our Navy-Yards

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to vie with each other in doing little, rather than much. For, say they, "do our interests require the work on hand to be finished, that we may be discharged for the want of employment?" They have been heard to boast—one that he had painted a wash-board in a day; another, that he had put a lock on a door. The price of each of these day's work was $2,00, or $2,50.

The sloop of war Falmouth was repaired in 1834:—

Cost of materials, - - -	$20,035 45	$25,747 65
do. Labor, - - -	5,712 20	

Sloop St. Louis, do. 1838:—

Cost of Materials, - -	$55,021 43	$119,435 28
do. Labor, - - - -	48,400 00	
do. Stores, - -	16,013 85	

Mark the difference between the price of Labor and of Materials in the two cases. By the estimates of 1824,* the building of a sloop of war of the 1st class, cost—Materials, $30,866 26; Labor, $15,650,—making $46,516 26; and her equipment is set down at $38,483 74—making the total cost when ready for sea $85,000. On the opposite side of the river, at New-York, packet-ships, larger than the St. Louis by one half, are built, fitted and found in the most elegant manner, with bulk-heads of bird's-eye maple, stairways of inlaid mahogany, airy saloons, splendid cabins, and magnificent apartments, all for $75,000, or $80,000. Whereas to *repair*, at a Navy-Yard, a ship but two-thirds the size of one of these, costs $119,435 28! And this case is not selected as the most extravagant. The mechanics at our Navy-Yards are employed by the day, and are not subject to Navy rules and regulations. When an officer demands more work of them than is required by their rule of private interest, he does it at his own peril. You recollect the Major Lendrum affair, recently enacted in Baltimore? Navy officers have long since learned, that *lettres de cachet* may be also issued against them. There is a quiet way of putting one under the ban in the Navy.

Forty-five dollars a ton for pig-iron is at this time paid, at one of our Navy-Yards, to make castings for the Navy. Ask one of your own iron-mongers the price of this article, and he will tell you that thirty or thirty-five dollars is all that he can get. Navy officers have nothing to do with making the purchase of such articles. They see the abuse and complain of it; and the Commandant of the Yard, at which such prices are paid, will tell you, that, had he the authority to exercise a proper control over the matter, he could save to the Government the salary of every officer attached to the Station. A United States steamer, already manned and equipped, is lying idle at Norfolk. Her officers and men would be glad of any active employment. And six dollars a head, for the transportation of seamen from Baltimore to Norfolk, are paid to other steamboats. But these are mere worm-holes, which, though they indicate that the system is faulty in detail, are alluded to for the purpose of showing that the 'leakage' under it, is by percolation and by drops, as well as by steady jets through open seams.

The delay in getting ships out upon their stations, and in relieving them when there; the practice of keeping their crews abroad, at greatly increased wages, after their terms of service have expired; and the delay* which sometimes occurs in paying them off when they do return, occasionally involving an expense of five hundred or six hundred dollars a day, are fairly chargeable upon the system. They are evils and injuries to the public service, which ought not to exist, and which a proper organization would not fail to correct. In 1833, (I have no statistics of a later date) the American trade with Canton was valued at sixteen millions of dollars. It has been nearly eighteen months since the East-India squadron left Canton for the United States, and more, since another squadron ought to have been in readiness to relieve it. That trade has been interrupted by an armed force, and nothing has been done to protect it. This delay shows that great difficulties must exist under the present system, in getting ships ready for sea. In this fact, we have an apt illustration of the condition in which the Navy is at present. No emergency can arise, short of a state of actual warfare, which calls, more urgently than this, for despatch. In the Spring, it was announced that a large squadron of ships was to be fitted out with all possible expedition for the China seas. In the Fall, that squadron has dwindled away to one sloop of war, and a long-legged, crank, six-and-thirty-gun ship—of all vessels in the Navy, the one least suitable for such service. But notwithstanding these efforts at expedition, and the urgency of the case, these two ships can scarce be said to be in a state of forwardness, for the time of their sailing has not yet been appointed.† If the Navy were under that system of management, which the general weal requires it should be, the timber, since the order was issued for the fitting out of these ships, might have been cut from the forest, and better ships than they might have been built and sent to sea long before these will reach their station.

What further proof need we that the plan, by which the affairs of the Navy are conducted, is defective in its details—that the whole system requires amendment and reorganization? Is the national peculiarity, which requires facts to precede opinion, so strong among your readers that it is necessary to multiply proof? If so, let them bear in mind the fact, that, during the present year, but one ship only has been equipped and got to sea in time to take her place on her station abroad. With

* American State Papers—Class vi. vol. i., p. 899

* *The delay*—more frequent formerly, than of late.

† They have not sailed at the time of going to press.—*Ed.*

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this exception, every ship that has returned from her three years of foreign service, has been compelled to leave her station before another could be got ready to take her place. The Columbia and John Adams, as before stated, from the East-Indies—the Lexington, the Falmouth, and the Boxer, from the Pacific,—the Independence from the Brazils, and the Vandalia from the West-Indies, have all returned under such circumstances. And though some of these left their stations more than twelve months ago—and none less than six—the Independence and the Boxer are the only ones among them whose places have been supplied. Does this look like the workings of a well-regulated system? Or does it not rather resemble the labor of a machine, the cogs and wheels of which are rusted and broken?

A judicious reorganization would prevent the recurrence of such evils, and dry up the sources of much useless expense which now exists. Besides this saving, as an offset and a recommendation, the balance-sheet would exhibit a ten-fold efficiency for the Navy, with an entire column of important national advantages in favor of increase and reorganization. An account of the savings effected in the first year after reorganization, might be stated roundly somewhat in the form below,—

The grade, with a list of 200 passed Midshipmen, abolished, - - - - -	$160,000
do. do. 17 passed Assistant Surgeons, -	18,000
do. do. 17 Teachers and Professors, -	20,000
Duties of Revenue Service transferred from a separate and distinct corps to Home Squadron,	225,000
Repairing old ships at more than their original cost, putting new upper-works on rotten timbers, e. g. Frigate United States, with 'many a blunder and foolish notion' besides, not known to the public, - - - - -	250,000
	$673,000

A sum more than sufficient for the pay of the additional officers required under the new system.

In explanation of the items mentioned above, and to show that they are not overcharged, a further statement is necessary—and 1st. The Frigate United States was repaired last fall at the cost of $80,000. She was manned, equipped and got ready for sea, when the carpenter reported that some of her timbers were rotten. She was accordingly surveyed and was condemned as unseaworthy. Besides the $80,000 thus wasted, there ought to be taken into the account, the pay of her crew of nearly 500 men and officers, that were on board of her for months—the cost, with the wear and tear of getting her from Boston to New-York, and from New-York to Norfolk—also the pay of her crew while waiting for another ship to be got ready at Norfolk. To which ought also to be added the injury sustained by our fellow-citizens and the public, in consequence of the delay in relieving an important station. 2nd. 'Many a blunder and foolish notion.' *Videlicet:* The steamer Fulton and other failures in ship building—transporting guns from the Lakes, where they are wanted, to New-York, where they are not wanted. You well recollect the inconvenience suffered in the last war, by the delay of getting guns to the Lakes. They were literally dragged there at an immense cost of labor and of money. And, as though guns may be never wanted on the Lakes again, they have been dragged back to New-York. The last tidings of them were given by the Inspector of Ordnance, a few years ago, who found them placed within the reach of salt water tides, undergoing a rapid process of rust and destruction.

Another charge under the head of 'blunders,' may be laid against a timber-dock, that was built many years ago at Norfolk, for water-seasoning. After this dock had been in use for some time, it was thought that water-seasoning impaired the durability of ship-timber; and the dock was filled up, and a ship-house built over it. Not many years afterwards, and, under the auspices of the same official body, (whether composed of the same individuals, I know not, nor does it matter, for my purpose is not to attack individuals, but to gain for the service, by showing the workings of an old and a bad system, the benefits of a new and a better one,)—under the auspices of the same body, then, another timber-dock has been commenced at Norfolk, larger and more splendid than the first. Thousands of dollars have been expended upon it; and it is not yet finished. The work upon it has been suspended for the want of an appropriation, or from some other cause. Perhaps the same official body has again decided that water-seasoning *does* injure timber, and that therefore it is useless to complete the dock.

In 1820, long before this dock was commenced, the Navy Commissioners wrote pages in proving to Congress that timber docks would be worse than useless. And what is still more remarkable is, that the Board should have advocated the building of this stupendous dock, after crowning, on that occasion, their objections in the following language—"The Commissioners beg leave here to observe, that if the objections already urged to the practice of immersion (preserving timber in water) should not be considered as conclusive, still it would be highly improper to resort to it at any of our building yards, where the worm is known to frequent, *Norfolk* and New-York for instance."*

But fully to understand the splendid folly of this undertaking, you must bear in mind, it is not to this day a settled point, whether water-seasoning is an advantage or a disadvantage to ship-timber. Some maintain that, in the process, an acid is generated by the action of the water upon the juices of the wood, which is highly injurious to the *latter*. Others, with

* Letter of Dec. 9, 1820, in reply to queries propounded on 24 Nov., 1820, by P. P. Barbour, chairman of Naval Committee, H. R.

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equal plausibility, on the other hand, maintain that the destructive properties in the wood (described by the Navy Commissioners as *certain acescent fermentative qualities of the sap juices*) are neutralized, by the infusion of a pickle which serves to preserve it. Though of such doubtful utility, this Dock was built, destroyed, and built again; and there was no one to institute a series of experiments, in order to determine whether water-seasoning preserves or destroys timber. Under a well-regulated system, would not this question have been settled, before estimates were made, or an appropriation asked for this Dock? At whose recommendation soever the enormous expenses of thus putting up and pulling down were incurred, wilful malfeasances of office are not chargeable under the present system upon any one. For, had the expenses been hundreds of millions instead of hundreds of thousands, I would still defy you, Sir, to set before the public that officer at whom you could point the finger and assuredly say, 'that's the man upon whom rests the blame of this thing.' So true, and so applicable under this system, is the old aphorism, that "in divided power, there is no individual responsibility."

It has been said that ships are repaired at more than their original cost. I have it, from good authority, that one of our sloops-of-war, which cost originally $85,000, was recently repaired at a cost of $120,000. And after all this expense, she would hardly be worth—for the purposes of war—the salt contained in the water which she displaces. Dull beyond measure, she could neither come up with an inferior, nor escape from a superior force. The original cost of the schooner Shark, was $22,000; and when last repaired, her repairs alone cost $46,000. In proving that the system is a ruinous one, I am willing that the above facts may be set aside as 'hear-say' evidence; and that the proof should rest upon the testimony of the expenditure-books themselves—a very few extracts from which have found their way into the "Lucky Bag." By such testimony then, partial as it is, let the system be tried. I challenge contradiction to the evidence afforded by the following statements:

Repairs of the Frigate U. States, in April, 1832:	
Materials, - - - - - - - -	$131,281 78
Labor and stores, not ascertained.	

In December, 1834—after an interval of only thirty-two months—this frigate was again under repairs.

Materials, - - - - -	$52,210 10	
Labor not ascertained.		
Stores, - - - - - -	23,285 00	
		$75,495 10

This frigate was again under repairs in 1839. After having been repaired this last time at a cost of $75,000, or $100,000, she was found to be rotten, and is now lying at Norfolk unfit for sea.

The cost of building a forty-four gun ship was reported, by Mr. Secretary Crowninshield, to the 14th Congress, in 1816, to be $153.475. The repairs put upon this forty-four gun-ship in the course of seven years, amount to more than twice that sum.

Repairs of Frigate Brandywine, in 1834:	
Materials, - - - - - - - -	$69,836 08
Labor, - - - - - - - -	31,636 48
Stores, not ascertained.	
	$101,472 56

Repairs of the Sloop Natchez, in 1835:	
Materials, - - - - - - - -	$31,653 00
Labor, - - - - - - - -	27,830 00
Stores, not ascertained.	
	$59,483 00

The rule among merchant-ship-builders is, that, on account of what they call 'dead labor,' the cost of labor compared with the cost of materials, is much greater in a large ship than a small one—the scaffolding for a large ship is much higher, and the timber much heavier—therefore more labor is required to hoist it up as well as to handle it. But observe how completely this very obvious rule is reversed in the cases of the Brandywine and Natchez. The former is more than double the tonnage of the latter—and while there are $38,000 difference in the cost of materials, there are but little more than $3000 difference in the price of the labor.

Refer to statements already made as authentic as the foregoing, and derived from the same source, concerning the repairs of the Pilot and Active, and of the Falmouth and St. Louis.

The Ohio, 80 guns, repaired at New-York prior to trip to Boston, in 1838-'39, (timbers not touched:)	
Materials, - - - - - - - -	$219,637 31
Labor, - - - - - - - -	193,970 20
Stores, not known	
Repairs at Boston, - - - - -	101,000 00
Stores, not known	
Repairs after return from Boston, -	79,371 00
Stores do. do. do. - -	27,377 00
Total as far as ascertained, - -	$621,355 51

To estimate at these rates the cost of such a ship from first to last, is like calculating the distance of the most remote star that can be seen through the telescope of Herschel. The result is so overwhelming, that the mind cannot grasp it when expressed in the ordinary terms of measurement; and the astronomer tells his pupil how many years it would take a cannon-ball or a ray of light, travelling with all its velocity, to reach that distant world. The money which this ship, now on her first cruise, has already cost the Government, if run into bars of silver, would, without hyperbole, be almost enough to ballast the largest of our live-oak built frigates.

By Admiralty regulations, the cost, under peace rates, of building and *equipping* for sea a ship of 120 guns in the Royal Navy, (furniture and sea-stores included,) is about $348,945, (£78,135.) The ratio between the cost of materials and of la-

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bor in England, is stated at one-fourth or one-fifth. You have seen by the statistics furnished above, that under our system there is no such thing as rule or ratio in practice, though the rule by which estimates are made is about one-third. Another remarkable feature in this system is, the frequency with which repairs are called for. Men-of-war are built of live-oak—merchantmen of white-oak, usually. After a three years cruise, it is generally deemed necessary under the present system, thoroughly to repair a man-of-war. A white-oak merchantman, carrying cargoes heavier than the battery, the provisions and crew of a man-of-war, usually runs ten or twelve years—frequently much longer—before she is touched. She sails on the same seas, encounters the same gales and tempests; and, without having in her frame the substantial materials, or the strength of the other, outlasts her by many years. All of which is the fault of the system. The 'Great Henry,' before alluded to as the first ship with port-holes, was launched in 1515—and, without having been repaired, she was fit for service, when she was accidentally burnt *thirty-eight* years afterwards. The 'Sovereign of the Seas' was launched in 1636, and sixty years afterwards she *began* to require repairs. But let us come down to our own times. At a cost, in round numbers, of not less than $370,000, we find the live-oak built frigate, 'United States,' undergoing a process of thorough repairs no less than three times in the course of seven years. By statements made many years ago, and before this system was adopted, it appears that the repairs of this same frigate, from 1802 to 1809—a period also of seven years—cost but $46,924 14.* The United States schooner Dolphin went to sea in 1821, and was kept out of the reach of this *repairing* system. She continued in active service on the Pacific Station and among the Polynesian Islands for FOURTEEN years, and was never once repaired during all that time. The United States frigate Brandywine was built four years after the Dolphin, and has already been repaired three or four times. The ships of some of the packet-lines from New-York, after having run as 'liners' for eight or ten years, are then sold; and, without receiving any repairs whatever, go cruising round the world in pursuit of whales. The calculation is, that the large Liverpool packets that are now built, will run as sound and good ships for fourteen years.

By the estimates of 1816†—from which time the present system is dated—the building of a sloop-of-war cost $46,293. But you have already seen that the *repairs* put upon the sloop-of-war St. Louis at one time, cost $119,435 28. By the same estimates, the building of a 74 is put down at $217,412. The Ohio, 80 guns, was commenced about this time. And, in a communication to Congress from Mr. Monroe, on the 3d January, 1823, her cost is stated to be $294,042 97; of which 109,878 23 was for labor. But you have seen that the labor to repair her in 1838–'39, cost not less than $280,000; and that to repair her *only once*, cost, under the present system, $621,355 51*—almost three times her original cost. What would you, as a man of business, think of a ship owner, who, instead of selling his old ships, should proceed to *repair* them at such rates?

With such an exhibit as the above, meagre too of items as it is, do you not think the estimate of $250,000 too small to cover the 'blunders and foolish notions' incident to the present system? Would you not say that the savings to be effected under this head alone, by reorganization, would come nearer to $1,000,000 annually? To satisfy the cry of retrenchment and reform raised in the land, members of Congress, at its last session, seized upon the Commissioner of Pensions, increased his duties, and reduced his salary. But the abuses here set forth are not to be corrected by bringing down the pay of a Midshipman, or a Commodore. Honorable legislators are warned that the evils are deeply seated in the system itself, and are not to be removed by merely the plucking of a leaf, or the lopping off of a limb: the axe must be laid at the root—for nothing short of thorough and complete reorganization will do.

To what page soever I turn, I find my note-book filled with memoranda which exemplify the evils of the present system. However distinctly, within the walls of the Navy Department, usage may have drawn the line of demarkation between the duties of Secretary and Navy-Board, or however well it may be understood there, you will find but few able to trace it out of that building. Ask officers of the Navy, where the duties of the Navy-Board begin? or where its responsibilities end? or where rests its accountability?—and no two will agree in their reply. Ask the best informed citizens the same question. Some will tell you that the Navy-Board is a power behind the Secretary, greater than the Secretary himself—that there is a Master-Spirit in that Board which rules the Navy. Others will tell you that the evil genius of the Navy presides at that Board. Him they unjustly charge with every thing that goes amiss, and would hold responsible for the present condition of the Navy.

* American State Papers: Class vi., vol. i., p. 253.
† *Ibid*, p. 400.

* In the building of merchant-ships, the cost of labor is about one-half the cost of materials. In the Navy, the frigate Potomac cost $178,320 09—the labor was $87,039 69: Materials, $91,280 40.

The Columbus, 74, cost	
Materials, - - - - - -	$222,693 64
Labor, - - - - - - -	204,237 47
Total, - - - - - -	$426,931 11

But in consequence of the pulling to pieces, the cost of labor compared with materials, ought to be greater in repairing than it is in building.

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Or go to the act by which that Board was created, and you will find that it may be nothing at all, or every thing—so vague is the law.

A few months ago, when, in the opinion of many, a war with England was more than probable, an officer in command abroad, anticipating such an event, wrote, that he could neither run, nor chase. All that he could do, would be to stand and fight whatever force should choose to attack him; for there was not a vessel in his squadron, except one, that, under the most favorable circumstances, would sail more than *five knots* an hour. Whom would you hold responsible for the building of these tubs? Under the present system, the law makes no one amenable. Therefore, admitting that every officer who had any thing to do with their models, their construction, or equipment, did his duty, you must charge the fault upon the system, and hold up the fact as an example in illustration of the defects of the present organization. We have seen in a former number, how officers, acting under a defective system, 'preserved the line' in fleet engagements, did their duty, and brought defeat and disgrace upon the arms of England. Like causes produce like effects. Assuredly as war comes upon us with the Navy in its present condition, as assuredly will there be disaster at sea; and, in a general confusion and consternation, officers may expect to see the tragedy of Byng reënacted on the quarter-deck of some American ship. A few months ago, an English sloop-of-war, called the Rover, (one of Symmonds' ships,) challenged the whole of this *five-knot* squadron to a race. The one that was the *least dull* among them took up the gauntlet and was distanced with ease.

For the sake of further illustrating the practical effects of a system, under which it can so happen that a nest of tubs can be turned out upon the Navy, and sent to sea as men-of-war, let us suppose that the question of the North-Eastern Boundary Line had been settled by a resort to arms. This five-knot squadron would have been employed in the Gulf of Mexico, where it now is, to give convoy and protection to the commerce there. Suppose it to have under convoy, from Mexico, Texas, New Orleans, Mobile and Pensacola, a large fleet of merchantmen, freighted with the rich products of the Mississippi valley, of the mines of Mexico, and of the West-India Islands. The ocean is whitened for leagues with the sails of this fleet—the breezes are fresh and fair, and the Rover falls in with it. With crowds of canvass spread to the wind, the American squadron are 'sweating along' under as much as they can drag at the rate of five knots an hour. The Rover is cutting about them at the rate of ten or twelve knots; and, in spite of the best exertions of officers and men, burns or destroys the whole fleet of merchantmen. A series of disasters such as this would not fail deeply to wound American pride; and, under such calamities oft-repeated, we might expect to hear the many-tongued and merciless voice of popular clamor, crying aloud for the blood of some unfortunate officer more innocent and guiltless than they who cry: for the people now, while it is time, may correct the evil and prevent disaster, by placing the Navy upon a proper footing.

In no period of equal duration have as many improvements been made in Naval architecture, as there have been within the last forty years. But on this side of the Atlantic these improvements have been mainly confined to the commercial marine. As our merchant ships have advanced in elegance of model, combining the qualities of strength, capacity, and fleetness in admirable proportions, so have our men-of-war receded. The vessels of this five-knot squadron are all new ships. It is well known that the vessels built by Humphreys and Eckford—before the present system came into existence, or had fairly fastened itself on the Navy—are to this day the favorite and the fastest ships in the Navy; and some of them were built more than forty years ago. The cause of this is fairly attributable to the system adopted in the Navy. The Constructor is subordinate to the Navy-Board, and the Commissioners may approve, alter or reject the model which he is required to submit to their inspection.

It is well known that the Commissioners had their own way in the building of the Columbus seventy-four; for they undertook to make her the model-ship* of her class for the Navy. They failed, and produced a ship—the masts and hull of which alone, cost $426,931 11! It is said that Eckford insisted on having his way too in the building of *one* ship. He produced the Ohio, eighty. She is to this day the *crack-ship* of her class in the Navy; and though much larger than, did not cost as much as, the Commissioners' ship, by $132,888 14!

Ship-building and ship-sailing are entirely distinct and separate professions. A knowledge of the one no more implies a knowledge of the other, than grave-digging implies a knowledge of medicine. Naval Architecture forms no part of the education of our Navy officers: and when the Constructor exhibits the model of a ship to the Navy-Board, the Commissioner, like the dealer in pictures, may or may not be a *connoisseur* in the art. He may tell by the *eye*, whether the piece before him be in comely proportions—whether there be too many hollow lines, too many curves, or proper water-lines—whether too much breadth here, or depth there. But let either the picture-dealer or the Commissioner touch a line, or attempt to alter the piece before him, and the whole will be blotched and spoiled. When the models of the Constitution, the United States, and the Ohio were

* *Model-Ship.* See letter from Navy-Board to the Secretary of the Navy, Sept. 5, 1822.

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drafted, there was no Navy Board with its Commissioners to supervise—to cut off a little here—to add a little there—and to take away or mystify responsibility. Every body knows who built the Ohio; but who can tell the father of the Fulton, or of any other of our new and dull ships? Eckford and the elder Humphreys were each wholly and entirely responsible for the success or failure of his own model.

Dull ships are not the only evil results experienced in the Navy from building on bad models. It is an opinion often expressed among old seamen, that the character of officers depends in a great measure upon the ship in which they sail. Such, they say, is the influence which the character of a ship exerts upon the youth who serve in her, that a dull sailer seldom turns out active and energetic officers. A fast ship on a beautiful model is the pride of a sailor's heart—she bends gracefully to the breeze; and, bounding over the deep, bears him safely and swiftly along; she rides out the gale like a duck on the water—and in the storm she behaves like a thing of life, dashing the foam from her bows and leaping over the waves; or stopping to buffet some threatening billow, she rises, trembling from the shock, as though she were conscious of her danger. On board such a ship, duty is a pleasure, and is always performed with alacrity. Active herself, and quick in her movements, those on board are required to exert themselves in a corresponding degree, and thence are formed brisk and active habits in the performance of duty. Their affection and pride endow her with qualities that call forth the most unremitting care and attention on the part of the officers, who seek to add to her efficiency and to improve her appearance by giving her an air of more perfect order and neatness. Thus a spirit of energy is kept alive, and habits of diligence too are formed that are greatly to be desired. She is a hobby at sea with old and young. Her proportions are studied; and, like a bride for the altar, they strive to beautify and adorn their ocean-favorite in the most comely rig—not a rope-yarn is loosely laid; and no part about her escapes the ever-watchful care of her officers. They note her appearance with pleasure—point her out to others—tell of her noble qualities, and descant upon her beauties with feelings of pride and exultation. Excelling other ships herself, it becomes a lively principle with them and her crew also to excel in their turn. By such influences do good ships tend to model good officers. But your slow ship, Sir; she is 'an old *droger*'—a mere log in the water. Dull herself, her officers become habitually so; the crew suiting their actions to her's move lazily along,—and thus her character is impressed upon those who serve in her. Awkward and uncomely in appearance, every thing looks lubberly. There is no pride of ship about her to excite and give energy—nothing to combine pleasure with duty, or give zest to exertion. Unrig and refit, change and alter as you may, her tub-like proportions and qualities remain as they were; and the officer finds in her no improvement to compensate for his trouble, and nothing to gratify professional pride. Like the Goede Vrouw of the Dutch Communipaws, she sails nearly as well sidewise as endwise, and serves as a mark for the cutting jibes and jests of seamen. To attempt to compete with other vessels is certain defeat; therefore the effort is useless, and there is no spirit of emulation among her officers. The shafts of keen ridicule that are aimed at her reach them; they soon become callous and manifest an indifference to the appearance and condition of their ship, which is a sure presage to habitual carelessness and neglect in the performance of duty. 'A quick ship for smart officers, and a dull ship for lubbers,' is one of the most approved on the list of ocean proverbs. In this way you perceive it is that a ship impresses her traits upon the habits of officers, and gives tone to their feelings and actions. She is the mould in which they are formed; and the connexion between the qualities of the one, and the character of the other, becomes as close as the umbilical cord. When a bad model is constructed for the Navy, those who adopt it entail evils upon the service that are more lasting than the dull ships they build. Like the influence of the first crime on the actions of individuals, one gross error in the Naval system is linked to a thousand evils in detail, which those who do not witness can never understand.

In viewing the Navy under so many disadvantages, there is one redeeming quality about it to cheer its friends, and to make glad the patriot's heart—and that is its moral condition. The tone of morals among officers in the Navy was never better, or at a higher pitch than it now is. About twenty years ago examinations for Midshipmen were instituted in the Navy; and before they can be examined, regulation requires, as a *sine qua non*, that they furnish the Examining Board with testimonials that their moral character is good. About the same time another regulation was introduced, by which those who enter the Navy as Midshipmen, are required to undergo a probationary service of not less than six months at sea, before warrants are issued to them. Both of these regulations have been attended with the happiest effects; and, in connexion with the encouragement that has been given to the introduction of libraries on board our public vessels, have served greatly to elevate the tone of morals in the Navy.

That no vessels should have been built under the auspices of the Navy-Board, comparable to the frigates of 1797, surely cannot be ascribed to any want of talent in the country. The fact ought rather to be ascribed to the defects of the system; for the finest merchant-ships that ever floated, are now built in New-York and other seaports. Hum-

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phreys and Eckford were merchant-builders; and the merchant service now affords finer specimens of Naval Architecture than they ever saw. Rather than the present plan should continue in the Navy, it were better to contract as formerly with private builders of well-established reputation—to say to them, the Government wants a ship of such and such materials to mount so many guns—detail an officer to see that the proper materials be used, and that the work be faithfully performed—and leave model and every thing else to the builder. But I find that the "Lucky Bag" contains the details of a plan, suggested by others, and highly approved of by officers generally, that is greatly preferable to this. And before you enter into an examination of this plan, I wish you to consider well the evils of the present system. There are many officers of sound judgment and experience, who will tell you, that, in case of war, they had rather command one of the New-York packets, fitted up as a man-of-war, than any corvette or second class frigate in the Navy. They will promise you more execution against the enemy, and more efficient protection to a convoy, than any such dull sailers could give. The principles of what is called Symmonds' plan—on which the Rover and other vessels of the Royal Navy are built—have obtained for years in the construction of the New-York packets. Increased breadth and lighter draft are the chief characteristics of this plan—a feature that is remarkable in the packets; for the packet-built ships now of a thousand tons do not draw more water, than the packets of only three hundred or four hundred tons did twenty years ago.

The Secretary of the Navy, in obedience to a call of Congress, submitted at its last Session a plan for the reorganization of the Navy-Board. That plan as far as it goes, and with some modifications, is such as the necessities of the service require. We have seen the want of individual responsibility in the Navy-Board. The duties at present required of it might, with great advantage to the public interests, be divided into at least three separate departments or Bureaux. The three officers who compose the Navy-Board, could then preside over these Bureaux—with this very obvious advantage and improvement—that, each Bureau being independent of the other, the head of each would be wholly and entirely responsible for his own acts. Besides these three, the Naval service embraces two other departments, each of which obviously requires for proper management, qualifications of a peculiar kind—these are the Medical, and the Architectural Departments.

The art of ship-building is a profession of itself, and is only to be acquired by great diligence, after years of previous and special instruction. The clumsy ships of the Navy afford eloquent—because they are practical—commentaries on the defects of a plan, that requires the master of such an art to submit his models and drawings to the inspection and alteration of a Navy-Board, which is likely to be, and no doubt has been, composed of men who have never read a treatise on ship-building, much less have studied it as a science. To remedy the evils, which, as we have seen, do arise from such a plan, a BUREAU OF CONSTRUCTION, under the management of the Chief Naval Constructor, is thought necessary; and is considered by intelligent officers as one of the most important features in the plan of reorganization. Like the head of each of the other Bureaux, he should be independent of all the rest, and responsible to the Secretary alone, and subject only to his orders. When a ship is to be built, he should be informed of the number and size of the guns it is intended she shall carry. But her model should be left entirely to him; and he should be held responsible for her faithful and proper construction. He should have an Assistant Constructor at each Navy-Yard, to see that his model be adhered to, that all his designs be faithfully carried out, and personally to superintend the construction. Officers of the Navy should have nothing to do with the ship, until she had passed from the hands of the Constructor into the water. She could then be turned over to the Bureau of Equipment, and got ready for sea.

Under the present system, the Medical Department is as much under the control of the Navy-Board as you have seen that Naval Architecture is. And the Surgeons are quite as much hampered as the Constructors, by the defects of the plan. To its corps of Surgeons, the Navy points with pride—for it can boast of some of the most eminent physicians in the country. We find them side by side with learned professors and prominent members, occupying chairs and places in our most celebrated colleges and institutions of science and literature. Ruschenberger's voyages, and Harris' life of Bainbridge are among the most popular works of their kind. As collaborators of medical journals, and contributors to the science of medicine, Surgeons of the United States Navy are held in great repute both at home and abroad. Horner's Observations on the climate and topography of the Mediterranean is a work of acknowledged merit. Barton's Flora Americana is *sui generis*. And Harris' numerous contributions to medical journals, are peculiarly rich and instructive; they are received with eclat among the learned doctors of every land. Yet such are the anomalies of the present system, that the Navy-Board are required to make rules according to which these men shall treat their sick. And what is still more extraordinary, when one of these Surgeons is ordered to sea, it rests with a Captain to say what medicines shall be laid in for the cruise. The Surgeon's schedule of medicines, like the model and drawings of the Constructor, must be submitted to the inspection of, and is sub-

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ject to be altered by, officers who know nothing of the art; and the former too frequently finds the pen of authority drawn across this or that item, in his list of articles for the hospital. If stricken out under its vulgar name, it may be reëntered under the technical abbreviation of its Latin name; in which case it seldom shares the same fate. Thus I knew a Commodore who erased 'gold leaf' from a Surgeon's requisition, as an article unnecessary in the dispensary of a ship bound on a three years cruise: but he had no objection to the same quantity of "*fol. auri. dent.*" Such are the little artifices to which even these distinguished Surgeons are sometimes compelled to resort, in order to procure the various items which they deem necessary and proper in the practice of their profession on board ship.

Not a great many months ago, the Surgeons had cause to complain of the regulations as to recruits, on the grounds that they were vague, and did not point out what should constitute disability. The Navy-Board were directed to point out to the Surgeons the defects, diseases and affections which should disqualify a sailor for the Naval Service. The result is, that the recruiting Surgeon is as much at a loss now as he was before; for if he be governed by the new code, he will seldom find an able-bodied seaman at all, and the Navy must perish for the want of men. Baldness, dandruff in the hair, ring-worms—for all manner of 'cutaneous diseases,' under this new code, constitute disability for the Naval Service. The holding of officers of one profession responsible for the duties of another, which they have never studied, and do not understand, (which is frequently done under the present system,) is not only unwise, but mischievous. For besides exposing to ridicule the officer who is required so to intermeddle, it serves to lessen one's respect for the laws, and to bring 'rules and regulations' into disrepute. The instance is of recent occurrence, wherein a Surgeon, being ordered on a particular service, found it necessary to go first to the Navy Department, and ask that some particular rule or regulation might be revoked or suspended, to enable him to do his duty and perform the service required, without laying himself liable to be tried by a court-martial. What beneficial results does common sense teach us to expect from a system, under which Navy Commissioners are made responsible for the model of the architect, and Navy Captains for the duty of Surgeons! That excellent guide teaches us, that the first step towards an effective system of accountability is to confine the attention of officers to their proper department, and to hold each one responsible for his own acts—"A ship-builder to build a ship—a sailor to manage a ship—and a doctor to take charge of the medicine chest," is the homely, but common-sense rule, in conformity with which a Medical Bureau is advocated for the Navy. In the work of reorganization, the propriety of establishing a National Dispensary in connexion with this Bureau, strongly recommends itself for consideration. Here, under the direction of the Surgeon in Chief, the medicines for the Navy might be prepared and put up in suitable cases. It is desirable that our public vessels when bound on long and distant cruises, should not only be supplied with good medicines, but that these, especially the vegetable medicines which are so liable to damage on board ship, should be put up and sealed, in small quantities convenient for use. Thus powd. Jalap might be put up in ounce bottles, marked 'HOSPITAL U. S. N.' in the mould, and sealed with glass-stoppers. When the ship returned, those that remain unopened, might be turned over to the Dispensary, as fresh and as good as they were when first received. It is customary now, to sell the damaged medicines which remain at the end of a cruise. The utterer of spurious coin or false notes is hunted down as a violator of the law, and an offender against good morals. What then should we think of a system, under which Government itself sets the example of retailing spoiled medicines, doubtless to the hurt of its citizens! If a National Dispensary were to serve no other purpose than that of correcting so baneful a practice, it were well to establish one. But I doubt not experiment will prove that economy and efficiency are both in its favor. For the medicines that are now condemned and sold as unfit for use, are bought up by the apothecaries, repacked, and frequently again sold to the Navy as fresh and good.

Ordnance, Supplies, and the Equipment of vessels for service, each, of itself, constitutes a separate and distinct department, which requires the supervision of experienced and intelligent officers. Some are of opinion, that to these three Bureaux, each under the control of a Post Captain, should be added a Hydrographical Bureau, and a Bureau to take charge of the Department of Steam. The Bureau system has been already tried and approved in the Army, and therefore ought not to be considered in the light of an experiment for the Navy. But neither steam nor hydrography is as yet made of sufficient importance in the Navy, to entitle either to a separate Bureau. The Navy Commissioner, whose duties are explained below, could detach the necessary officers for these departments, without any special law on the subject.

The duties of the Secretary of the Navy admit of subdivision and improvement, no less than the duties of the Navy-Board. The Secretary of the Navy is usually selected from among politicians, who have never made Naval affairs any part of their study. Neither is the selection made on account of any peculiar fitness or qualifications on the part of the incumbent for the duties of his office. Your readers are too well informed on the subject, to require any explanation of the motives and considerations which prevail in the selection of

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Cabinet members in this country. The Secretary of the Navy usually comes into office uninformed as to the condition of the Navy, ignorant of its wants and usages, and unacquainted with the official character and standing of most of its officers. Accordingly he goes to work in the dark, and, of course, blunders and mismanagement ensue. It is a postulate granted by common sense, that a knowledge of details is as essential to the proper management of the Navy, as to the proper management of every other business, whether public or private. Even to conduct the details of a ship, where every thing is reduced to the compass of a mere shell, the Captain requires the assistance of an officer exclusively for this purpose. The Commander of a fleet finds it necessary to assign the details of the fleet to one officer, and the details of his ship to another, that he may give that attention to the general superintendence and management of the whole which the general welfare requires. If then, these officers, whose particular business it is to manage ships, both singly and in squadrons, find the assistance of others necessary merely for the purpose of issuing orders and giving directions, how much more necessary must such assistance be to the Secretary, who is charged with the management of a whole Navy, and who comes into office ignorant of details!

In remodelling the office of the Secretary of the Navy, it is proposed that all the details of the service, such as ordering officers on duty, directing the shipment of men, the equipment of vessels for sea, and the like, should be entrusted to a sort of Under-Secretary,* who shall be a Post Captain in the Navy. And that the attention of the Secretary himself should be directed to a general superintendence of the various sub-departments proposed; that the heads of them shall be amenable to him—and that he should exercise an appellate jurisdiction over them; that he should direct what forces shall be employed, and where they shall cruise; that he should give instructions to our Commanders abroad; order courts-martial and revise their proceedings; and be responsible for the general management of the Navy. It is proposed that the style and title of this under-Secretary, be that of Commissioner of the Navy; that his department be constituted, like the rest, into a separate office or Bureau; and that, being next to the office of Secretary, the Bureau of Commissioner take precedence over all the others; which have been named without any regard to the order in which they should stand.

Within the last twelve years, there have been four citizens called at different times to fill the office of Secretary of the Navy. This has given us on an average, a New Secretary at the end of every three years. Within this time it is impossible that any one of them could have formed a proper estimate of the professional merits of officers, more than a thousand in number. Although the archives of the Department contain, for the most part, a just account of the peculiar qualifications and capabilities of every officer, they are of but little avail to the New Secretary; for the brief time of his official career, if devoted to nothing else, would not suffice for overhauling the musty records of the Department, in order to get at the character and standing of officers. Therefore, whenever a change of Secretaries takes place, the officers, especially the junior, feel that their peculiar good name, as far as the Navy Department is concerned, is blotted out and forgotten. The Secretary knows nothing of past services, and every officer has to commence, as it were, his career anew. You know the chief characteristics of true, and of fictitious merit. Your officer of true merit thrusts not himself forward, but delights to be sought out. Your man of mere pretensions is forward; he delights to be made conspicuous, and is loudest in his own commendations. Under the present system, when a new Secretary comes into office, those of the latter order are most apt to crowd around him, seeking to ingratiate themselves in his favor. For this they are often pushed forward. Hence it is we find the claims of real merit modestly set forth, so often thrust aside in the Navy, and the most honorable posts and important service confided and entrusted to those, whose want of qualifications many a time totally unfits them for such trusts. Such circumstances have given rise to the remark which has become so common, and to the truth of which most officers will subscribe; viz: "a cruise of a few months in Washington tells more than a three years cruise at sea in an officer's favor." In this condition of things, we have found one or two spirits among us base enough to stoop to acts of sycophancy and adulation—and we have even seen such coming forth crowned with Naval honors, and commended with the official "well done." Now, the details of the office of Secretary, conducted in the manner proposed, would put an end to all such scenes and acts. A change of Secretary would not be followed by a change of Commissioner. And if it were, another Post-Captain would succeed to the office, who, having spent his life in the Navy, would be, ex-officio, as well acquainted as his predecessor with the character and standing of his brother-officers. Had the modification proposed of the Secretary's duties no other recommendation but this, it would of itself justify the change. For one source of the present dissatisfaction in the Navy, is owing to the circumstance, that merit among officers so seldom meets with its just reward, but is rather made to give place to pretension.

In adopting this system of Bureaux, every officer

* *Under-Secretary.* The duties of whose office shall be to the Navy, what those of the Adjutant-General are to the Army.

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in the line of promotion would look forward to the day when he should himself preside at the head of some one of them. Therefore, as well from motives of economy, as for the sake of making officers familiar with the details of the system, it is proposed that the clerks' duties of the Post-Captains' Bureaux be performed by Navy officers. The chief assistant of each Bureau should be a Commander, who, in case of sickness, or temporary absence of the chief officer, might supply his place and act in his stead. The subordinate officers should be relieved at least once in three years. It is necessary to maintain more officers in the Navy, than are barely sufficient to perform the service connected with it in peace. Therefore, the duty of these Bureaux, if conducted by Navy officers, in the manner proposed, would afford them useful and honorable employment, and would not be attended with the additional cost of a single dollar—for with or without Bureaux, those officers would receive their regular salaries.

The taper is lighted and the wax is in my hand, but before I proceed to close up the "Lucky-Bag" forever, and to seal it, allow me, Mr. Editor, to thank you for your kindness, and your readers for their attention. Permit me also to say to those of my brother officers, who (if there be such) may feel that any of the foregoing statements bear hardly upon them, that I have sought

"Nothing to extenuate,
Or set down ought in malice."

Actuated by the desire to see abuses reformed, and the Navy placed upon its proper footing, I have felt it my duty, not to put forth bills of indictment, but to take my stand as a witness before my fellow-citizens, and tell what fifteen or twenty years of service in the Navy have enabled me to know. That things do go wrong, every officer will admit. To show wherein they do go wrong, and how they may be set right, has been the sole object with me, in ripping open the "Lucky Bag." By this means have I sought to call public attention to the condition of the Navy, knowing that if once properly directed to the subject, wholesome correctives would be applied. If such a result be not accomplished, the fault is not with the subject, but with the writer. And whatever be the result, his only reward will be the satisfaction, which one derives from the consciousness of having cast in one's mite for the common good. If, with this explanation, Mr. Editor, there be any to compare the abuses and the evils set forth with their own acts, and to complain—in homely phrase, I can only say to such—"if the cap fits, wear it." If called on in relation to any thing contained in the "Lucky Bag," you are at liberty to raise the mask, which conceals your friend,

HARRY BLUFF,
United States Navy.

OCTOBER, 1840.

EDWARD CLEONE'S BIBLE.

Passing down one of the crowded streets which intersect our ever-busy Metropolis, chance led me to the door of one of those odd receptacles for every variety of old traffic, a second-hand auction shop. I was about turning away, when the sonorous voice from within poured into my ear these mystic words:—"walk in gentlemen—walk in,—its a real continentaler, and no mistake—here it is, printed many a year before either of us was born,—how much for it?"

The quaint binding of the old volume struck my fancy, and I bought the book. It proved to be a copy of the Bible, which had the appearance of having been well read and carefully preserved. On the first leaf was written, in a female hand, "Edward Cleone's Bible—from his mother,—to be read every day."

On inquiry, I learned that it came under the auctioneer's hammer on account of the recent decease of its owner, an old man, who was found dead in his chair a few weeks ago. The neighbors among whom he resided, crowded round me, and related his brief history in the simplest manner. Few of them but shed tears over his mournful story. He died in extreme poverty, but they said his Bible was his constant study. When he was first discovered, his hand was resting on the opened volume, which he had apparently just been perusing. On the poor worm-eaten table by his side, were found these lines, traced by the tremulous hand of age on a blank leaf which had dropped from his time-worn treasure.

Reader! 'tis a beautiful lesson, the death of that old man! He had seen "better days," but he never forgot his God.

JOHN v: 39.

Search the Scriptures! Seek and ponder
Mighty Truths in every line—
When the feet of childhood wander,
Toward the heavenly page incline.

Search the Scriptures! daily, nightly,
Truth that on life's threshold stands;—
Like a beacon, burning brightly,
They will warn of treacherous sands.

Search the Scriptures! pray, believing,
Aged man with locks of snow,—
Trust in God! go on, receiving
Joy the world can never know.

Search the Scriptures! Jesus taught them:
Way, and Truth, and Life are they;
Saints in heaven long humbly sought them—
Saviour! help us to obey! F.

Boston, November, 1840.

ONWARD.

"Fleeting as were the dreams of old,
Remembered like a tale that's told,
We pass away."—*Longfellow.*

Onward, swift, the river flies,
Bounding to the silent deep,—
Onward, through the azure skies,
Far the glitt'ring planets sweep.

Onward wing the summer birds
To a distant, brighter sky,—
Onward float the mutt'ring words
Tempests speak so solemnly!

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looks like Atlas, strong enough to sustain the world upon his shoulders. On the other side is another ridge of equal altitude—the two forming the sides, the eternal walls of a natural fortification, being flanked at their extremity by a ridge of corresponding height, which links the mountains into one. Within this fort a comparative abundance of wild game is still to be found, particularly wild-hogs, descended from the domestic breeds, but fierce as the monsters of the Pyrenees. It is called "Powell's Fort," after one of the first settlers of the country—the valley of the creek is also known as the Fort.

There is a curious and popular tradition cherished in the neighborhood regarding "Old Powell." It is said that he was an advocate of a specie currency, and, to assist the Government in the promotion of a specie circulation, established a hard-money factory on his own responsibility, and coined thousands of the genuine "*Carolus III—Dei Gratia*"—procuring his metal from mines in the vicinity, only known to him. Suspected, and fearing detection, he barrelled up his immense treasure, and buried it at various places in these mountains. Without disclosing the secret, he died; and the barrels of silver still remain undisturbed, because undiscovered.*

But we have not lacked for *exploring expeditions*. In reconnoitering this region I have met with frequent excavations—evidences that the silver-hunters had been at work. Tom tells me, that he once encountered on the side of this ridge, two Dutchmen and a negro industriously delving into a bank of rocks, at a place where one of the party had seen a *blue light* glimmering the night before—no doubt they were "*blue light, bank-bought Federalists*:" but the *silence* had been broken, or their *faith* failed, or the *hour* had passed, and the money sunk deeper (as they believed) into the rocks. Poor fellows! They had better been mauling rails at fifty cents per diem. These supernatural lights are often seen by our superstitious people, who can "see things that cannot be seen;" and as often do these lights deceive. When will the darkness of ignorance be dispelled!—when will reason reign?

What a fine view of the Valley is here! See the North river, here fitfully gleaming through embowering trees, there broadly glowing in the golden light! That pretty looking village of white houses is ten miles away—it is Middletown, condemned by every hog-drover who passes through, as "the most shackling, most ornery place in God's creation!" And so it is: but to me it is like Auburn, "the loveliest village of the plain." Canst thou, fair reader, tell the reason? Five miles beyond is another village, and twenty miles in the distance, the smoke rises from Winchester. To our right, eight miles, is Front Royal, in that hole from which the smoke curls upward as from a coal-pit. How smooth the whole face of the scene! The fields, the woods, the towns, the mountains, all seem to be laid down on a map, rather than to be the landscape of a living world. To the east is the Blue Ridge, stretching up to the heavens with so gentle an inclination, that it is covered with farms and farm houses; and with its deep green piney woods—its green and yellow waving fields of wheat and corn—oh! how beautiful! And round the High Knob there is a column of white clouds resting in the sun. I have often wished, when a boy, that I had wings, that I might fly away and mount those rolling clouds, and rise with them to Heaven! To the westward, the uniform lines of the North Mountains form the boundary of this El Dorado stretching away from our feet.

The sun is gently sinking among the accumulating clouds around his throne in the West—the evening zephyrs are returning from the flowery fields of the sweet South. Lift thy dark locks, my beloved one, from thy fair brow, that these blessed spirits of the air may fan thy fevered temples with their balmy wings! But there comes another odor from the world of earthlings below—more redolent than the breath of flowers, and more welcome, as appertaining to this earthly tabernacle. 'Tis the fragrance of bacon; and I know that the good wife of the hospitable Locofoco aforesaid is lifting a choice hog-round from the kettle; and I feel like the vulture, when his keen olfactories detect in the passing wind the locality of a dead animal, anxious to be there! Replace thy bonnet, my dear lassie, wrap thy shawl about thy glowing shoulders, give me thy basket, and let us hasten to partake of the swine.

Fort Mountains, 1840.

* See Kerchival's History of the Valley.

SUPPLEMENT TO THE "LUCKY BAG,"

No. IV.

"The principles of what is called Symonds' plan—on "which the Rover and other vessels of the Royal Navy are "built—have obtained for years in the construction of the "New-York packets. Increased breadth and lighter draft "are the chief characteristics of this plan—a feature that is "remarkable in the packets; for the packet-built ships now "of a thousand tons do not draw more water than the packets "of only three hundred or four hundred tons did twenty "years ago."—*Sou. Lit. Mess., Jan.*, 1841, *page* 22.

To Mr. T. W. White,

Editor of the Southern Literary Messenger.

According to a friend in whose opinion I place great reliance, I have in the above extract laid myself liable to be charged not only with an error, but with a want of generosity towards Captain Symonds, the Surveyor of the Royal Navy. By the sentence—"The principles of what is called Symonds' plan have obtained for years in the construction of the New-York packets,"—some have understood me to mean that the *models* of Symonds' ships and the packets are the same, and that consequently the models of the one had been borrowed from the models of the other. As such is not the fact, and as it was not my wish to convey any such meaning, I deem it proper to offer a few remarks in explanation. The two classes of ships are constructed upon principles which give them great capacity, increased length and breadth, light draft, little or no *dead-rise*, and good sailing qualities: though the forms or *models* by which these results are obtained are no more alike than a semi-elipse is like the two sides of an isosceles triangle. "The distinguishing characteristic of Captain Symonds' plan for ships," according to one of the master-builders* in H. M. Dock-Yard, Chatham, "is increase of principal dimensions,"—a feature that is remarkable in the packets. But the model of a New-York packet bears no more resemblance to the model of one of Symonds' ships than a cylinder does to a prism; for the model of the former is not unlike the half of a cylinder somewhat flattened and compressed, while that of the latter is

* John Major, student in the School of Naval Architecture.

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prismatic in its form. But one being a man-of-war, and the other a merchantman, their models must necessarily be unlike. The broader the man-of-war (having a due regard to other requisites) the better—but the *narrower* the merchant ship, the fewer the hands required to sail her, and of course the less it costs to navigate her. But the packets have as much beam for merchantmen, as Symonds' ships have for men-of-war. These ships have *rising* floors, and buoyancy is obtained by increasing the length and breadth, particularly the latter. The buoyancy of the packets, on the other hand, has been obtained by the great length and breadth of their *long flat* floors; and the lightness of draft has been still further promoted, by building them to sail on *even* keels. By this means the full width of the floor can be carried much further aft than it can be in ships which are intended to trim two or three feet by the stern.

The New Orleans bar, and our shoal harbors at the South, as well as the great increase of tonnage in our merchantmen, have made lightness of draft an important feature with our merchant builders. Pilotage, too, is generally chargeable by the foot, and for the greatest draft, whether forward or aft. Hence the economy, as well as the necessity, for the long flat floors, and even keels, with their light draft. Moreover, if a ship on an even keel should happen to touch either forward or aft—as ships frequently do in coming in and going out of our southern ports—she can be readily *tipped* to get her off; and in entering the Mississippi, it is customary to bring the ship down by the head, to prevent her from swinging round when she strikes on the bar, which she generally does; and for the same reason, in coming out, she is brought down by the stern.

The mere rules for measuring tonnage have an important bearing on the model of the merchantman—whereas they have nothing to do with the calculations for the construction of a man-of-war. Hence the "kettle-bottom ships," so much in vogue a few years ago. They were constructed so, that the rules by which the law required their tonnage to be computed, would make it much less than it really was. This was to evade tonnage charges, which, in the New Orleans trade, where steam towing was so expensive and was charged according to the *registered* tonnage, constituted no small item. In this way you would often see a 500 ton (register) kettle-bottomed ship carrying the cargo of a 600 ton *wall*-sided, flat-floored ship. These vessels, however, damaged their cargoes, and were otherwise disapproved of. Moreover, a new measurement being adopted in England, they had to pay all charges there, such as dock rates, &c. &c., as 600 ton ships. Were our present rules for measuring tonnage to be alone consulted, vessels of small *nomianl* tonnage would be obtained by building their models like long, deep narrow boxes, having the corners rounded off. But then there are the necessity of a light draft for many harbors, and the *economy* of a light draft for pilotage, to counteract the advantages of a small tonnage by the *register*. Another practical difficulty in the way of such models, is the great quantity of ballast (and consequently the greater draft of water) they would require. It is desirable to sail a merchant ship with the least possible quantity of kentledge or shingle ballast; and the practice is now coming into vogue of building their upper works much lighter than formerly. This lessens the weight to be driven through the water. Hence much shorter and lighter masts and spars are used, though this applies to freighting-ships rather than to the packets. It it thought that if the method of measuring tonnage were altered, so as to be some guide to the actual capaciousness of the vessel, our merchant builders would have a much better field for the exercise of their taste and talent.

As men-of-war, one great recommendation in favor of Symonds' ships, is the economy of construction, owing to the comparatively small quantity of *curved* timber required. The draft of his ships is not quite so light as that of the packets, though much lighter than our vessels-of-war of the same class. The Vestal, a small class frigate, is one of his ships. She has a beam of forty feet and a half—and when in her best trim for sailing, according to Symonds himself, draws sixteen feet forward and seventeen feet aft, which is the draft of some of our sloops-of-war. The Constellation, an American second class frigate, (somewhat larger than the Vestal,) draws twenty-three or twenty-four feet water.

I am, sir, with respect,
Your obedient servant,
HARRY BLUFF,
United States Navy.

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N. B. Be pleased to note the following errata in your January issue:

Page 3, 2d column, line 10 from bottom, "for the two years that followed, not one," read "the year that followed, eleven."

P. 12, col. 2, line 4 from top, for "assayed," read "essayed."

P. 13, col. 2, line 25 from top, for "*in pacem*," read "*in pace.*"

P. 25, col. 1, line 26 from bottom, for "Or set down aught in malice," read "Nor set down aught in malice"

Yours, H. B.
U. S. N.

ALBUM DEDICATION.

To wit and common-sense alone
This Album should be brother;
Ye fools, who are without *the one*,
Pray let alone *the other!*

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